The ascent of women : how female mountaineers explored the Alps 1850-1900

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The Ascent of Women: How Female Mountaineers Explored the Alps 1850-1900

Clare A Roche

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Declaration

I, Clare A Roche, declare that this thesis is all my own original work.

Signed

Date

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the largely neglected history of female mountaineers who walked and climbed in the Alps between 1850 and 1900. This discrete group of women provide the means to re-evaluate, not only the history of mountaineering, but also several wider issues concerning the social and cultural understanding of middle-class women's roles and experiences in the second half of the nineteenth century. By closely analysing women's mountaineering accomplishments, this study explores their relationship to conventional ideas of gendered 'separate spheres' and the female as the 'weaker sex.' The demonstration of physical ability and the adoption of 'alternative' lifestyles by women mountaineers suggest normal rules of propriety were frequently waived. Analysing the circumstances these particular women embraced, casts a new light on the alleged constraints of Victorian femininity.

The work focuses upon the status, perception and use of the female body, physically and emotionally, in a given environment. It is particularly concerned with women's own agency and with the assessment of how far female climbers ignored society's expectations. These issues are considered against the backdrop of powerful cultural 'norms' that affected the perception of middle-class women's 'natural' abilities and aptitudes. The thesis reveals how women constituted a distinct, autonomous and active presence within the mountains, and undertook challenging, sometimes unprecedented ascents, occasionally in advance of men. At a time when climbing was widely perceived as 'manly', the thesis asks how far women accepted this mantle and how far they retained a distinctive feminine identity. The study suggests a more fluid and less confining vision of femininity emerged, at least in the mountains, for many middle-class Victorian women. Finally, the thesis considers a variety of historical as well as historiographical factors that have contributed to the occlusion of women's life experiences both generally and specifically from the history of Alpinism.

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Introduction

I accept the peril.
I choose to walk high with sublimer dread
Rather than crawl in safety.
- George Eliot, *Armgart.* (1870)

'True it was late: true we were cold, hungry and tired; true we were sinking into the snow above our knees; but the Teufelsgrat [ridge] was ours and we cared little for these minor evils.' This was the triumphant cry of the alpinist Mary Mummery in July 1887 on reaching the summit of the Taschhorn (4490m), one of the highest peaks in the Alps. The route, the 'Devil's Ridge,' had never been climbed before. An experienced guide called it the 'embodiment of inaccessibility' because of its narrow, airy, razor-like ridge that dropped vertically to the glacier a thousand metres below (Figure 1).[1]



Figure 1.The Teufelsgrat Ridge (on the left) of the Taschhorn.[2]

[1] Mummery 1908.
[2] www.summitpost.org/mountain/rock/150704/t-schhorn.html.

It was a marvellous achievement but not without difficulties. The unknown terrain caused many delays, route finding was difficult and Mummery confessed at one point,

> A black horror seized us. Return was not to be thought of and advance seemed impossible. There we four stood, absolutely powerless, teeth chattering with the bitter cold and the damp, cruel mist ever driving across threatening to add obscurity to our other bewilderment.[3]

The problem of finding an accessible route resulted in Mummery's climbing party becoming benighted on the mountain. They escaped from the worst of a storm that threatened them on the summit but 'inky darkness' forced them to bivouac until first light. 'After wringing the water out of our clothes [we] were reduced to dancing various war dances in the vain hope of keeping warm,' declared Mummery.[4] They started their expedition at 1.30 am and finished at 5.30 am the following day, after twenty-eight sleepless hours in often sub-zero temperatures.

This thesis studies women, like Mary Mummery, who climbed and walked in the Alps between 1850 and 1900. It asks what can be learnt from their excursions, behaviour and lives that might cause some re-evaluation of the perception of middle-class women in this period. Using several previously untapped sources it constructs, to the best of my knowledge for the first time, quantitative data of women's climbing accomplishments in the second half of the nineteenth century (discussed in chapter 4 & set out in the appendix). This information is used to give detailed consideration to four broad issues: how female mountaineering related to the social and cultural mores of the Victorian age: the standard of women's climbing compared to men's: the effect of female involvement in climbing on the gendered perception of mountaineering and finally consideration as to why women mountaineers and their accomplishments have remained hidden from general view for so long.

The study purposely limits its focus to women's climbing in the Alps because, for both sexes, this is where mountaineering was born; this was the setting where

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3 Mummery 1908, 88.
4 Mummery 1908, 93.

women, as well as men, first embraced serious climbing as an end in itself. Restricting the thesis to this area makes possible a richer, more detailed study of the material nature, as well as the social and cultural aspects, of women's relationship to climbing. Most of the women studied are British because, as with men, the British were largely the initiators of alpinism. The study concentrates on 1850 to 1900 because this period saw the birth of alpinism for both sexes, secondly, women climbed all the major Alpine summits for the first time between these dates, and finally little historical research has focussed on women mountaineers of this period.

Three interlinked subjects are central concerns of this thesis. The first, and arguably the most crucial, concerns the implications of women's mountaineering on the perceptions and expectations surrounding the female body. I argue that the way the body was utilised, displayed and experienced by women when climbing between 1850 and 1900 has both specific and more general implications. The rich historiography of the body has shown the shifting and continuous way human physique is culturally constructed and interpreted according to time and place.[5] Clearly, for an activity like mountaineering, the body's abilities are important for both women and men. However, at a time when women's roles were often seen as biologically determined the capacities and limitations of the body in actual lived experiences, such as mountaineering, had added significance. The way the body appeared, performed and behaved was taken as emblematic of identity and resonated with wider questions regarding social control or the possibility of unbounded freedoms. Understanding physical and emotional responses to different environments is an important aspect of the thesis.

A second linked subject, that runs throughout this work, concerns gender construction itself in nineteenth-century culture and thought; many of the pertinent debates and discussions in this study hinge on what was deemed suitable for one sex or another at a particular moment in time. During most of the Victorian period male and female attributes were perceived both as highly

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5 Bordo 2003; Bynum 1999; Csordas 1994;Fausto-Sterling 1992; Haley 1978; Jenner and Taithe 2003; Jordanova 1989; Laqueur 1990; Mauss 1973; Porter 2005; Schiebinger 1987; Welton 1998; Young 2005a .

polarised and distinctly hierarchical. It was commonplace, for example, to regard women and children, together with other 'races', as both inferior and less 'evolved' versions of men. It is against this background that the history of women mountaineers needs to be placed.

A third issue is the invisibility of women and the hidden nature of their activities. It is not only the sparse attention given to women's actual feats as climbers that is striking but also their exclusion or belittlement in subsequent literature and historiographical discourse. Several histories of mountaineering, travel, exploration and sport in this period have been written with little acknowledgment, or perhaps any authorial awareness, of women mountaineers' accomplishments. Yet, as will be shown, women were frequent sights in the high mountains from the mid-1860s, a fact that has only recently started to be recognised.

Evidently issues of power and dominance pervaded many aspects of 'gender' and 'the body' in the nineteenth century and had much to do with both occluding women's activities from the records and affecting their representation. This was not just in the obvious political sense of denying the suffrage but more prosaically through, for instance, conventions of etiquette, physical activity, dress, depiction in magazines or newspapers and discussions of gender roles. The control and dominance of society by one hegemonic group allows its concepts, ideas and activities to evolve and remain persistent, while those of the more subservient remain obscured, concealed or rebuffed.[6] Attention to how particular groups are rendered visible and invisible, central or marginal is clearly required in many forms of historical study. This is particularly relevant where sport and exercise in the nineteenth century are concerned. Here, as will be seen, class and gender were important considerations.

In positioning women climbers within the wider history of mountaineering, exploration and sport, the thesis undermines the assumption that strenuous exercise and independence were anathemas for most middle-class women in the

[6] Bates, 1975.

second half of the nineteenth century, even as it shows that many obstacles existed to such activity.

Sources, Methods, Difficulties.

The thesis is based on close examination of the material nature of women's climbing expeditions – of women's concrete actions rather than the advice, expectations or instructions given to them. This presents a challenge as several leading female climbers wrote little or nothing about their activities. Much information comes from friends, family, newspapers and magazines. These are valid and useful sources, but a different light is cast by studying the first-hand accounts that do exist; they provide direct contact to the relatively hidden life of Victorian female climbers. The silence of many women, however, means much cannot be known for sure about their experiences either in the Alps or at home.

Despite these cautionary remarks, ample material exists from which to construct, analyse and situate women's mountaineering. This study draws upon books, written by both male and female climbers, personal journals, photographs, public and private correspondence, guide's books, hut and hotel records, articles from magazines and newspapers and the contents of the *Alpine Journal*. The Alpine Club (AC) in London and the William Coolidge collection of papers in Zurich are particularly rich resources. The latter contains extensive correspondence from most of the leading climbers in the second half of the nineteenth century – male and female. Importantly it houses many personal letters of mountaineer Meta Brevoort that recount, in detail, her climbing experiences from 1864 to 1876.

Photographs are used critically throughout the thesis, not only to identify individuals and activities, but also to inform on such things as dress, etiquette and other social or cultural determinants.[7] Photographs of climbing or family groups proved popular with many mountaineers. Clearly, given the technology of the time, there were restrictions on when and where cameras could be used. Many photographs were taken in controlled studio environments, like those of Tiarraz in Chamonix, but as advances occurred real mountain locations were

[7] see Sontag 1978 for a critique of the uses & abuses of photography

increasingly used.[8] Mountaineers Elizabeth Le Blond and Lily Bristow in the 1880s and 1890s were some of the first to master the skill of snow or action photography. [9]

The pictures are interesting on several fronts and require careful consideration as a form of documentary evidence. No less than other genres used in this thesis, photography is subject to conventions that often change according to time and place. It is notable that even when women, such as climber Lucy Walker, declined to write publicly about their mountaineering they were not averse to being photographed. These pictures were not just personal keepsakes but were often requested and sent to wider family, friends and acquaintances and so entered, to a limited extent, the public sphere. Many letters in the Coolidge archive are asking, or thanking, people for sending photographs of themselves. This exchange of pictures was part of middle-class social convention.

Photographs were also, however, important memorialising records of people and their pursuits at a particular moment in time. They often served to celebrate those they depicted and provided a means of sharing and remembering family, friends and their activities more widely. Moreover, early photographs allowed those who were unable to travel some vision of, and contact with, mountaineering. Studio pictures such as figure 39 are typical of the genre. Complete with alpenstocks and token rope the four participants gaze straight ahead rather than at the camera, giving the somewhat stilted illusion of following each other along a glacier. Taken in the late 1860s this photograph was probably sent to family and friends in Britain. Studio photographs were a practical option – cheaper, easier and with a more predictable outcome than transporting cumbersome equipment by mule or porter onto a real glacier where the vagaries of weather were a further consideration. As technology progressed *in situ* pictures, such as figure 12, began to replace this type of photograph within ten to twenty years.

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8 Tiarraz 1975.

9 The Martin & Osa Johnson Safari museum has the largest collection of Le Blond's photographs http://www.safarimuseum.com/research/permanent-collection/elizabeth-main-le-blond-collection/.

The poses adopted and the positioning of people within photographs also requires consideration, as it can tell us something about the prevailing social mores. For example, it was common for women to be framed by men who often stood on the outside or encircled the group, as seen in Figures 12, 23 & 30, where they symbolically afford protection for the women, who are often seated. Figure 29 is an extreme instance of this convention where an apparently dominating robust man squarely and confidently faces the camera next to his diminutive, seemingly shy, wife. This observation, however, requires a note of caution; it is important not to over interpret what is seen, or to use photographs in isolation. It can be easy to lay contemporary preoccupations with gender onto scenes where, in fact, it has less bearing than we might imagine. Pictures need to be viewed, where possible, in conjunction with other sources. Such an approach helps to qualify or, at times, complicate the possible meanings of a photograph. Contrary to appearances, for example, the lady in figure 29 was far from timid or repressed, but rather a self-assured woman who organised expeditions and claimed more first ascents than any other in the nineteenth century. She successfully managed difficult and unprecedented climbs long after her husband died.

To give some idea of topography and scale, present day pictures are also used in the thesis. However, it is important to recognise that due to erosion and shrinking of glaciers, these do not portray *exactly* the same landscape that nineteenth-century mountaineers experienced.

The AC owns a plethora of sources that befits the oldest mountaineering club in the world. Registers from remote mountain huts are just some of its collection. These places were only used by climbers and contain many women's signatures as do the *führerbücher*.[10] The latter were individual guides' testimonial books in which clients wrote of their guides' specific skills and integrity. In 1856 the Swiss canton of the Oberland tried to oversee these books as a way of

[10] The Alpine Club London has *führerbücher* from over 100 guides from 1852 to 1927, the majority covering the years 1862 – 1900.

implementing a regulatory system. The aim was to establish a level of competency, enforce minimum age restrictions on guides and porters, determine maximum luggage weights and importantly set tariffs for various routes. A few *führerbücher* had fees written within them, some detailed common climbing routes and summits used, but most contained only the regulatory requirements with the date of issue. The books were produced or stamped annually and could be withdrawn if guides transgressed the rules. In 1857 the canton of the Valais followed the Oberland's lead and also began issuing them.

While most guides used *führerbücher* the uptake of these 'official' versions was variable.[11] Guide Peter Knubel, for example, had his own private book as well as one issued by the canton. Daniel Maquignaz seems only to have used his own, whereas famous guide Christian Almer, whose reputation had little need for testimonials, nevertheless, always seemed to proffer the 'official' version.[12] When the various national alpine clubs were formed – French (1874), Austrian (1869), Italian and Swiss (1863) - they gradually took over guide regulation from local governments or in the case of Italy and Austria inaugurated them.[13] Clubs also offered the guides some insurance and steadily increased their numbers to deal with rising demand. They also built and maintained huts.[14]

Whether *führerbücher* were issued by the government, by clubs, or owned by individual guides their relevance, as an important source for this study, is the same; regardless of type they record that many women undertook expeditions, ranging from well-known, relatively safe journeys over a neighbouring col to longer, first ascents in unfamiliar terrain. The books are indisputable evidence of women's active presence high in the mountains and not, as they have often been perceived, as passive onlookers staying in the valley. They reveal women who would otherwise remain hidden, who often did not publish or write any lasting

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[11] Hansen 1999, 216-217.

[12] 'Peter Knubel Führerbüche', 1865-1873, K1,K2,K3. 'Daniel Maquignaz Führerbüche,' 1878-1882, K19. 'Christian Almer Führerbüche',1859-1880, L1. AC. London.

[13] In 1860 the organisation of guides was taken over by the French government from Chamonix's Compagnie des Guides, at the behest of the AC, to allow climbers free choice of their guide rather than be allotted whoever happened to be at the top of the list.

[14] Hansen 1999, 218-219.

memoirs. The motive for women, or their relatives, to write in *führerbücher* was to recommend the guide and advertise to other climbers the type of routes they and the guide had accomplished. There was little scope for embellishment. Whilst not all women's expeditions are represented in these books they provide possibly the best evidence to date of a more widespread involvement of women's engagement with walking and climbing in the high Alps during the nineteenth century than previously thought.

Another useful source is *The Alpine Register*. Despite the club's exclusively male membership, this compilation of brief biographies of all members of the AC up to 1900 contains details of many women who accompanied various members on their climbs.[15] As will be shown, many men accepted female climbers who were often part of a mountaineering social circle that remained connected all year round, not just during the summer climbing season.[16] The AC journal, which began in 1860, contains details of some women's climbs and expeditions even though it was 1889 before it accepted papers written by women.[17]

This thesis also draws upon diaries, memoirs, books and letters including a previously unseen journal by mountaineer Elizabeth Spence-Watson. These, of course, are no less complex or 'mediated' historical sources than the images just discussed. Letters, for example, depending who they were written to, often conformed to prevailing social expectations. Women alpinists writing to family commonly made light of any danger, anxiety or privation encountered. As will be discussed in chapter six, most books written by women about mountaineering followed a similar vein; they claimed they were not doing anything 'unfeminine' while often describing the exact opposite. In interpreting these sources, therefore, one has to be mindful of the pressures on women to conform to social mores.[18] Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that writing was almost invariably retrospective; letters were written in the evening following a climb

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15 Mumm 1923.

16 See the extensive collection of letters in the William Coolidge archive Zentralbibliothek, Zurich.

17 Jackson "A Winter Quartette," 1889 was the first article accepted and attributed to a woman in the *Alpine Journal*.

18 Recently there has been a surge of interest in the letter form see Garfield 2013; Usher 2013.

and diaries were commonly compiled after an expedition from notes made at the time.[19] Clearly this hindsight allowed greater opportunity for both embellishment and omission. Whatever first impressions the mountaineer may have felt when climbing, writing was a secondary revision of that initial experience, which was itself conceived and influenced by certain preconceptions about things such as travel, landscape, mountaineering and the self. However, these caveats do not invalidate the documents as relevant material. No source, written or visual, is ever a comprehensive or completely objective account; it is the product of human agency and in the case of images a certain technology. All have their own constraints and opportunities.

Evidence of women's actual mountaineering ascents provides a strong material source to complement that of letters, journals or opinion pieces. However, it must be recognised that even the simplest record of an expedition was also an exercise in writing and sometimes of celebration. Nevertheless, climbs and expeditions were real, distinct, lived events. Whilst words can be insincere, misinterpreted, or consciously used for ulterior motives, women's recorded actions and ascents may arguably offer more reliable evidence, particularly when several different sources often attest to, and therefore help to corroborate, the facts of an individual climb.

To understand more closely the achievements and experiences these women encountered I regarded it as important for this study to attempt some of their itineraries myself, for example, Mont Blanc, Gross Fiescherhorn and the Monch. It must be stressed, however, that this was not intended as an accurate reconstruction; modern, lightweight clothing, equipment and transportation systems ensured it was easier for me than it would have been in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, modern communications and rescue services means twenty-first century mountaineering is far safer than in the Victorian period. Nevertheless, these excursions provided valuable insight into what climbing a 4000-metre peak might involve – pressures of altitude, fitness demands,

[19] Elizabeth Spence-Watson wrote some of her diary after she returned home to England from a notebook she used at the time.

precision movements, exposure to large drops, narrow arêtes and inclement weather. Such phenomena, which remain the same today as they were in the nineteenth century, all gave me a keener perception of what mountaineering entailed, physically and psychologically, for Victorian women.

Social and Cultural.

This thesis is concerned with social as well as cultural history. By 'social' I mean the networks and structures of human relations that existed within, for example, politics, religion, businesses, clubs, families, professional bodies and universities. By contrast, 'culture' concerns the development and representation of ideas, meanings, attitudes and narratives as well as modes of behaviour and ways of being. Culture, in this study, relates not just to textual representation but also art, embodiment, actions, gestures, performance and behaviour. Social and cultural histories are, of course, always intertwined. All social structures produce ideas or meanings that, by definition, are also cultural. Similarly narratives or modes of behaviour occur within social structures, and to some extent are shaped by them. There has been a close and sometimes difficult relationship between social and cultural history.[20] This led to a famous series of debates in the 1990s over how and what each discipline can contribute to historical knowledge.[21]

The complex relationships of society to culture, so evident in the difficulties between social and cultural history, were central to the study of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Consequently many historians and philosophers have used his work.[22] Bourdieu's intertwining notions of 'field,' 'habitus,' and 'symbolic capital' are particularly helpful in tracing the significance of the actions and interactions of people in the mountains. 'Field' is an area of social relations where 'players' are 'competing for the same stakes,' even though this competition is never made obvious.[23] Those within the 'field' are trying to gain power and dominance over others but in such subtle ways that they should never appear dominant.

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[20] Stedman Jones 1983 provoked much debate over the role of social history & the use of theoretical concepts as seen in the following papers Bentley 1999;Claeys 1985; Cronin 1986; Epstein 1986; Gray 1986; Lawrence and Taylor 1993; Mayfield and Thorne 1992; Mayfield, Thorne, and Arbor 1993; Vernon 1994. For an overview of social history see Kent 1996.
[21] Bonnell and Hunt 1999; C. Jones 2004;Joyce 2010; Mandler 2004.
[22] Buzard 1993; Gunn 2000; Gunn 2005; P. Jackson 2008; Lovell 2000; Moi 1999;
[23] Bourdieu 1993, 133.

Examples of a field in this thesis are the actions of the upper middle-class and 'travellers' in contrast to 'tourists'. The almost unconscious rules of the field are contained in its specific habitus. In relation to class, for example, habitus includes using or having certain expressions, thoughts and feelings, of moving, dressing, behaving and responding to situations in particular ways. These unspoken, automatic rules, gestures and habits determine what, or who, can legitimately be incorporated, or barred from a field, and so act as censors; inclusion giving perceived power over the excluded. This creates a specific form of capital to be wielded over others, the major components of which are taste and judgement - hence the term symbolic capital.[24] This, as will be seen, is brought into play in encounters between climbers and 'tourists', between some women and their guides, as well as in life above and below the snowline.

The subtle social power exerted by compliance to a field's habitus can create self-subjugation. In this Bourdieu draws close to Foucault's work on the different cultural modes by which people are made subject.[25] In Victorian Britain, for example, power over women and their bodies was made manifest particularly, (although not exclusively), through forms of etiquette, constraints on women's education and activities, politics, depiction of women in literature, the closed nature of the professions and many doctor's views of the female body.[26] These often subtle powers asserted an insidious pressure, which, over time, an individual could almost unconsciously accept and internalise so that eventually they willingly adopt the behaviour, dress or actions determined by the dominant group. In reaching this degree of compliance, women could become complicit in their own subjugation.[27] Foucault's proposition helps explain why many women persisted in wearing confining dress and why some, such as Sarah Ellis and Eliza

[24] Bourdieu 1984, 511.
[25] Foucault 1994, 326.
[26] Riley 1988, 44–51, considers at length how historically women have been both subjugators and subjected.
[27] Thompson 1999, 1–23; Taylor 1870 urges women to act for themselves so as not to strengthen the existing male dominance; by contrast Sara Ellis urges women "to be content to be inferior to men" quoted in Hollis 1979, 15; Hacking 2006 gives examples of contemporary subjugated or confined peoples, eg mental health patients, who manipulate situations to their best advantage.

Lynn Linton opposed greater equality for women and why others, as will be seen within mountaineering, were reluctant to attract attention to themselves.[28] This thesis, however, is as much a history of actual lived experience, as it is an investigation of the discourses surrounding women's bodies and spheres of activities. I focus in detail on the lived material conditions of women's lives, their documented experience of the mountains, and the commentaries that surround them. The aim is to illuminate women's understanding of their accomplishments and of the constraints within which they operated. This entails some investigation not just of articulated attitudes but of the feats, pains, pleasures and sensations of the body in a given environment. In this regard the work of existentialist phenomenologists Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Simone de Beauvoir has proved useful.[29]

There has been vigorous and extremely heated debate, recently, between historians regarding 'micro history' and the benefits or disadvantages of analysing short as opposed to longer term perspectives. Details of these arguments are beyond the remit of this work, and it must suffice to refer the reader to the relevant literature.[30] However, I argue there is merit to both sides in the debate and in this thesis adopt a balance of the two approaches. For example, grasping the 'micro' detail of what everyday life as a mountaineer actually entailed is crucial for a meaningful understanding of women's endeavours and activities; it provides vital information to contrast 'mountain life' with their 'normal' existence in Britain, or European towns and cities. Such material, important and interesting in its own right, has yet further significance, however, when placed within a wider time frame; it provides a vital piece of the jigsaw in the larger picture that depicts how women's situation, in western societies, has slowly changed socially, politically and culturally between the nineteenth and twenty–first centuries. Women's issues in the Victorian period often resonate with difficulties that many continue to face in several countries today; where, for example, women are still trying to gain control over their lives and their own bodies. The combination, I maintain, of both short and longer-

[28] Linton 1883; Twycross-Martin 2004; Stickney Ellis 1840.
[29] De Beauvoir 2011; Merleau-Ponty 1976.
[30] Cohen and Mandler 2015; Guldi and Armitage 2014; Guldi and Armitage 2015.

term historical perspectives provide for a more relevant, intellectually satisfying and informed position than either just the *longue durée* or short term 'microhistory'.

1. Development of Women's history

In attempting to recover, reconstruct and interpret women's activities, this study is indebted to the rich vein of feminist women's history that began, in Britain, in the 1970s with works such as Sheila Rowbotham's *Hidden from History* (1973) and Anna Davin's 'Women and History'. During this period of second wave feminism, authors like these revealed how academic history had virtually ignored the historical importance of women's lives.[31] The fervent pressure and activity of these early feminist historians eventually ensured women's history became an essential part of the curriculum in university history departments. A generation of historians consequently emerged that began to investigate the diverse experiences and contributions of women in a wide array of fields; for example, in employment, politics, family and economics.[32]

Initially studies concentrated almost exclusively on female lives and experience but as women's history developed, interest spread to the wider topic of gender. Seen as the cultural display of sexual difference, gender was central to Davidoff and Hall's extremely influential work on the middle class, *Family Fortunes* (1987). These historians famously described how, with the growing division of work from home, the ideology of 'separate spheres' for men and women became more widespread. This topic has since been energetically debated.[33] Although historians have largely rejected the picture of a harsh, unbending dichotomy of passive, weak, dependent women confined to home and assertive men concerned solely with external public affairs and business, it is undeniable that Victorian society harboured very different expectations for middle-class men and women; something particularly pertinent to the lives of female mountaineers.

[31] Davin 1972; Rowbotham 1977.
[32] Delamont and Duffin 1978; Liddington 1978; Vicinus 1972.
[33] Alexander 1994; Francis 2002; Gleadle 2007; Riley 1988, 44–51; Vickery 1993.

The possibility of women's history mutating into gender history, however, has provoked concern and debate.[34] It is convincingly argued that for women's lives and experiences to be valid in themselves, not seen as adjuncts to men, women's history should remain a separate focus of study and not be subsumed within the broader remit of gender.[35] Such an approach encourages investigation specifically of women's experiences; of female reactions to broad developments in culture and society, but also of the everyday minutiae that makes a woman's life. This thesis, while recognising gender study is essential for understanding relations between the sexes, and crucial in comprehending society at large, pursues the feminist historian's goal of trying to make women visible where previously a 'male' view of the past often meant they were hidden.[36]

However, understanding not only the construction and meaning of femininity but also its counterpoint, masculinity, remains essential for any useful interpretation of how society functions. R.W Connell was one of the first to study and raise the topic of different masculinities, particularly the concept of a hegemonic form.[37] John Tosh's work has been particularly pivotal in exploring diverse types of masculinity. He eloquently investigated the interplay of men's and women's private lives at home, school and work.[38] Gender study, with its implicit recognition of the interaction of the sexes, has undeniably added a richness and more complex understanding to the historical appreciation of both men's and women's lives. In fields like mountaineering, however, where women have been virtually ignored, a combined approach, that considers both issues of gender and the two sexes separately, seems preferable. It helps reveal a more nuanced perspective allowing a focus specifically on women while simultaneously examining social relationships more broadly.

In the 1980s the acknowledgment that natural forms of sexuality were not as polarised as the early years of women's history assumed combined with post-structuralist thought to generate new questions as to whether a concrete

[34] Corfield 1997; Purvis and Weatherill 1999.
[35] Purvis and Weatherill 1999, 335.
[36] Purvis and Weatherill 1999, 333.
[37] Connell 1995.
[38] Roper and Tosh 1991; Tosh 1999.

definition of woman was either possible or helpful. Historians Joan Scott and Mary Poovey warned of the dangers of constructing a new canon of women's history because they felt the identity of 'woman' itself was not a single subject. Rather, they argued, entities such as 'woman' or 'man', previously regarded as 'natural', were constantly shifting constructions contingent on culture and time.[39] Denise Riley persuasively argued that the collective term 'women' could be confining because of the powerful, stereotypically feminine, attributes associated with the word.[40] Moreover, the more women's rights were fought for, or discussed, the more the category of 'women', she argued, became seen as something apart from and different to general 'humanity' – something needing 'special' consideration.[41] This ironically set 'women' up as a category to be discussed and debated in a way not experienced by men; it entrenched women as the 'other', even though they were about half the population.[42] This issue of equality and difference has been central to debates about women into the current era.[43]

Many historians have progressively shown how women in the nineteenth century manipulated, subverted or, on occasions, ignored the rhetoric of 'separate spheres.' The active agency of women has been traced across a range of socio-cultural situations such as politics, economics, work, family and the law.[44] The current study is indebted to, and in turn contributes to this historiographical trend. Clearly middle-class women were not a homogenous group but contained people who had, or were subject to, very different expectations, constraints and conditions; female mountaineers were one small part of that social class. By studying the agency of these climbers it is possible to see how women, who were often involved in activities that appeared to transgress social mores, navigated their way through complex cultural expectations to achieve their goal.

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39 Poovey 1988; Scott 1988a.
40 Riley 1988, 12–13,44–66.
41 Riley 1988, 13.
42 Riley 1988, 13,45–46,107.
43 Bromley 2012; Scott 1988b; Riley 1988, 58.
44 Bourke 1994; Finn 1996; Fraser 2014;Gleadle 2001; Gleadle 2013;Green and Owens 2003; Hall 2000; Langland 1992;Morgan 1997; Morgan 2007; Murdoch 2014; Schwartz 2013; Thompson 1999a; Twycross-Martin 1996.

1.1.Women, Empire and Travel.

Women's manipulation, subversion and utilisation of the ideology of separate spheres is particularly evident in accounts of travel, exploration and interaction with empire.[45] Journeys to Imperial or non-European countries have tended to dominate historical interest; this thesis, therefore, is relatively unusual in centring its research on Alpine expeditions. Most of the issues women encountered in far away countries, however, apply with equal force to other domains, if not always to the same degree or in exactly the same context. Most scholars agree that *any* travel abroad positioned women in ambivalent or ambiguous social and sometimes sexual situations.[46]

Travel, of course, meant embracing the public space – an arena that the idea of 'separate spheres' typically coded as male. After all travel could entail risk, even overt danger, be unpredictable and involve ventures into the unknown; it stood in stark contrast to a more secure, familiar, private, feminine world. Several women, however, negotiated their way in and through this public space albeit attempting, simultaneously, to maintain their feminine identity.[47] This was important if women were to write authoritatively and have their experiences taken seriously.[48] The excellent anthology of travel writing compiled by Foster and Mills details the various ways women, in different countries and situations, proclaimed their femininity often whilst embarking on singularly 'unfeminine' activities.

Exploration and conquering 'virgin territory' – as the language implies – have also been heralded as particularly male enterprises.[49] Possibly because of the sexual association of men dominating and probing nature, Domosh and Seager allege women had little interest in the 'claiming and naming' of new terrain.[50] This, however, may simply be shortage of opportunity rather than lack of desire. As will be discussed in chapter four several women climbers, for example

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45 Birkett 1992; Blunt 1992; Blunt and Rose 1994; Domosh and Seager 2001; Hassan 2009; McEwan 2000, 25–59; Pratt 2007.

46 Bassnett 2002; Domosh and Seager 2001, 143–146; Johnston 2013, 19–55; Kearns 1997, 456; McEwan 2000, 19, 46; Mills 1994, 39.

47 Blake 1992; Blunt 1992; Foster and Mills 2002; McEwan 2000; Mills 1994.

48 Bassnett 2002.

49 Mills 1991, 44.

50 Domosh and Seager 2001, 144.

Katherine Richardson and Meta Brevoort, were very keen to be the first to a summit or claim an innovative route wherever possible, just as they equally determinedly maintained symbols of their femininity. Both women, in fact, had summits named after them.

Although women were part of the imperial system, like their counterparts within mountaineering, they also stood on its margins. White women's race afforded them a superior social status but their gender, in a masculine colonial system, placed them in an inferior situation. Empire reverberated with images of male adventurers, soldiers, civil servants and missionaries wielding various degrees of authority, violence, conquest and subjugation.[51] Women, by contrast, although not absent, usually occupied more passive Imperial positions as wives, daughters and helpmates. This is despite Queen Victoria's position as the preeminent figurehead of British Imperialism, consolidated, in 1877, with the title Empress of India.[52] Non-European peoples, as Said famously proposed in his studies of Orientalism, were seen as something 'other', quintessentially different to the occupying force of predominantly protestant, white, middle-class males.[53]

This position of difference was something all women shared, to a degree, with non-European races. Deemed inherently incapable of similar intellectual or physical prowess to men, an idea strengthened by developments in nineteenth-century evolutionary theory, women were also classified as 'other'.[54] White women, therefore, had to negotiate the difficulty of being socially elevated by virtue of their race but, simultaneously, inferior by gender. Consequently most women, such as Mary Kingsley in West Africa or Isabella Bird in America, behaved and dressed differently depending on whose company they were in. They were careful to maintain symbols of European femininity when required but reverted to more pragmatic traveller lifestyles otherwise.[55]

Many of these issues resonate with similar concerns experienced by women climbers. Although race was not an obvious problem for female alpinists, being

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[51] Domosh and Seager 2001, 144; Mills 1994, 37.
[52] Cannadine 2001; Cohn 2012 .
[53] Kearns 1997, 451; Levine 2004, 6–7; Said 2003.
[54] Darwin 2004, 622–631.
[55] Bird 1879, vii; Blake 1992; Blunt 1992, 52.

socially superior one minute and inferior the next was something they, too, had to navigate. Employing guides and initiating expeditions meant women mountaineers clearly held positions of control and authority; moreover, when climbing, liberal dress codes and lifestyles applied. Off the mountain, however, social convention reappeared and women's subordinate position resumed. Female climbers, like travellers elsewhere, had to attempt to slip seamlessly between these contrasting positions. For them, place and class rather than race were the confounding issues.

As men and women wrote from different social positions it is unsurprising their travel accounts are noted for providing alternative perspectives. Foster and Mills, nevertheless, warn of the dangers of essentialism.[56] They remind us that other things influence writing apart from gender, for example, class, age, time period, race and location, not to mention the individual's own idiosyncrasies; it should not be assumed all women wrote in a certain way simply because they were female. That said, most people, men or women, write of things they know most about. This led to the majority of Victorian female travellers commenting on such things as food, houses, religion, health and children, while men, more typically, provided statistical data of journeys and terrain.[57] Being a woman, however, could provide insights denied to men. Women, for example, often were welcomed into typically feminine spaces denied to men – places such as kitchens, bedrooms and nurseries. They were also perceived as less threatening which encouraged people to be more forthcoming and less defensive.[58]

Two separate studies particularly demonstrate the contrasting way men and women conducted similar expeditions; Mary Kingsley's 1895 expedition to climb Mount Cameroon is compared to Halford Mackinder's climb of Mount Kenya and Mary Hall's 1907 trip from Cape to Cairo is contrasted with Ewart Grogan's same itinerary.[59] Here, women's more conciliatory, less adversarial manner is very evident. They learnt more of the languages, peoples and cultures they encountered than men and had no need to justify their presence by providing

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[56] Foster and Mills 2002, 3–4.
[57] Bassnett 2002; Kearns 1997.
[58] Blake 1992; Foster and Mills 2002, 14–18, 35–45,46–55; .
[59] Blake 1992; Kearns 1997.

authorities with maps and statistical data.[60] Women were often able to use their femininity, including its perceived vulnerability and weakness, to their advantage; it enabled them to penetrate the public world of travel, usurping and challenging it as a male space in the process. The absence of heroic narrative, often combined with quotidian detail, characterised the writing not just of these far-flung travellers but also of women mountaineers, as will be seen.

Whether women travelled abroad as mountaineers, settlers, missionaries, explorers, artists or simply as tourists the lifestyle they led, or observed in others, was very different to the one they left behind in Britain. Freed from some of the social restrictions of home, openly occupying the public sphere and with an opportunity to see other cultures, women were often prompted to reflect or make comparisons with life in Britain.[61] Anna Jameson, Fanny Kemble and Lucie Duff Gordon, for example, contrasted women's situation in Upper Canada, Georgia (USA) and Egypt respectively with that in Britain. Whilst noting that British women were generally better off, they also pointed out that the criticism and comment levelled at how other peoples treated their women was often hypocritical or simply ignorant. Jameson, for instance, noted how Indian squaws were able to keep ownership of property when married, unlike women in England. Duff Gordon commented on the greater social equality that existed in Egypt and Kemble contrasted the dishonourable behaviour of plantation owners with the tragic dignity of several slaves she met.[62] As will be seen with female mountaineers, travel to remote areas and different communities provided the opportunity for women to observe, sometimes embrace, and frequently to reflect on the different ways it is possible to conduct a life.

1.2. Women and Science.

The development of women's history has also unearthed female involvement with science; a topic, like exploration, that had hitherto often been thought exclusively male. Some feminist historians allege science, since the seventeenth century, to have been purposefully masculinist. The development of the

60 Kearns 1997, 462.
61 Foster and Mills 2002, 18–20.
62 Gordon 1983, 99–103 (1st published 1865); Jameson 2008, 57–63 (1st published 1838); Kemble 1969, 40–41,93–94 (1st published 1863).

experimental method with its mechanical view of the world, they maintain, incorporated an ethos of control, dominance and penetration of nature, which, for millennia had been thought of as feminine.[63] Science, it is claimed, excluded women as participants, underrated any contribution they did make and developed theories that further subjugated them.[64] Women, however, as readers, writers, members of audiences, assistants, investigators and collectors formed a substantial part of the Victorian culture of science.[65] Women like Mary Ward (1827-1869), Mary Somerville (1780-1872) and Caroline Herschel (1750-1840) are renown for their contribution to maths, geology, physics and astronomy. More commonly women were involved in subjects such as botany, conchology and entomology; areas thought more appropriate for 'ladies'.[66] Mary de la Beche Nichol and Frederica Plunket, for example, were two mountaineers who were also active entomologists and botanists.[67] Several women wrote on scientific subjects but often in terms of 'popular science' aimed at children, the working class, or female audiences.[68]

Women might engage with science but gendered expectations determined how and in what genre. The developing professionalization of science and impact of Darwinian thought pushed women further to the margins. The scientific credibility associated with *The Descent of Man* (1871), that openly asserted 'man has …become superior to woman,' cemented women's existing subordinate position.[69] Historians have shown, however, that women dealt with the repercussions of Darwin's work in a number of ways including claiming a particularly unique female type of 'genius'.[70] As in other aspects of life – travel, education, and the notion of 'separate spheres' – the development of women's history has revealed the various ways women found to accept, circumvent or loosen some of society's constraints.

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[63] Bowler and Morus 2005, 487–493; Fox-Keller 1996; Merchant 1990.
[64] Fox-Keller 1996; Merchant 1990.
[65] Bowler and Morus 2005, 495–498; Phillips 1990; Russett 1991; Shteir 1997.
[66] Catlow and Reeve 1845; Catlow 1848; Gatty 1863; Plunket and Plunket 1985; Shteir 1997, 237.
[67] Thomas 1979.
[68] Bowler and Morus 2005, 498; Shteir 1997, 244–247.
[69] Darwin 2004, 631.
[70] Alaya 1977; Egan 1989; Erskine 1995; Love 1983; Richards 1997, 122–138.

2. Gender

As already suggested gender is the social and cultural construction and display of sexual differences; most societies associate certain roles and activities – both physical and psychological – with being either male or female. Such perceptions of gender are not fixed, however; as society and culture alter with time and location so do the values, expectations and distinctions associated with various genders. Moreover, in twenty-first century discussions of gender, biological sex is of less importance than it was during the Victorian era. The word 'gender' was rarely used in the nineteenth century, 'sex' referred to both the cultural constructions of masculinity or femininity as well as someone's biology; little distinction was made between the two. The term 'gender' in this thesis, whilst recognised as anachronistic in relation to its usage in Victorian times, is nevertheless employed as the most efficient way to discuss the cultural attributes and associations of sex. Sexual differences were central to many social and political debates and developments in the last half of the nineteenth century; for instance, within discussions over suffrage, education, family, morality, health, exercise and work, hence the importance of gender to this study of women's place and activities in the mountains.

2.1. Science and Anatomy.

The perception that men and women had very different roles and abilities has existed since ancient times but in the eighteenth century science and philosophy sought to provide a rational explanation. [71] The influential philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was a powerful advocate of 'separate spheres' ideology. As will be discussed in chapter one, his ideas held sway long after his death and played a significant contribution to the cultural foundation of social mores under which women mountaineer's lives played out.[72] Eighteenth-century anatomists appeared to offer material support to Rousseau by alleging women's

[71] Tuana 1993, 21, 169.

[72] Rousseau's view on women's natural role was a stimulus to Mary Wollstonecraft to write *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). For more on this see Taylor 2003; for Rousseau's view on the different sexes see Schwartz 1984; for his view on nature and influence on the Romantics see Cooper 1999; Riley 2001; Rousseau 1993.

general conformation and smaller skull size limited both their physical and mental abilities.[73]

By the mid-nineteenth century geographical exploration, scientific enquiry and rational thought were coming together to increasingly question, and at times answer, elemental ideas about the natural world and man's place within it.[74] Evolutionary theories in many ways supported ideas of sexual difference. The relationship between structure and function was held to be fundamentally important and science appeared to show men as more highly evolved than women. Nature, with which women were metaphorically associated, was increasingly a topic for the predominantly male scientific community to investigate, probe and dominate. [75]

This burgeoning fascination with the natural world was reflected in interest in anatomy; the first museums of which opened to the public in 1839.[76] The physical body was increasingly regarded as a resource to be read; its morphology and anatomy provided information about a person's natural abilities, their weaknesses and strengths, as seen in the popularity of phrenology.[77]

Given this trend of linking anatomy to character and ability, it is perhaps unsurprising nineteenth-century doctors and anatomists identified women's 'essence' to be centred in their biology in a way it was not for men. As one late nineteenth-century physician wrote, it is 'as if the Almighty, in creating the female sex, had taken the uterus and built up a woman around it.'[78] Historian Ornella Moscucci has shown how the development of gynaecology was built on nature myths about women. During the 1840s, the ovaries were increasingly seen as the organ from which woman's essential difference flowed; they were

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73 Schiebinger 1987, 64.
74 Lightman 2010.
75 Burke 1997; Jordanova 1989, 21–42; Moscucci 1990, 33.
76 Alberti 2007; Bates 2008.
77 Cooter 1984.
78 Poovey 1987, 145.

‘the seat of the sexual instinct’, the physical link with nature and a more primitive animal world of automatic behaviour.[79]

The work in science and medicine of measuring skull and pelvis size, investigating the purpose and causes of menstruation, attempting to understand how gender and race fitted within human evolution was seen as providing explanation, proof even, for the legitimate structure of society. Whereas previously male hierarchy was simply accepted, now there was an apparently ‘scientific’ explanation. Science, it was believed, showed why superiorities and sexual differences should be maintained; it was the ‘natural’ order.[80] These well-known debates surrounding ‘separate spheres’ and ‘anatomy as destiny’ are important because they provide the context against which the behaviour, activities and feats of women mountaineers can be situated and understood. As will be discussed in chapter three, medical advice given to women, and the social expectations that commonly surrounded them, often sprang from such ideologies.

2.2.Women and Society.

Despite the apparently restrictive influences on women’s activities, several historians have shown how women in the second half of the century became increasingly active politically, socially and philanthropically.[81] Although prior to 1850 women were involved in the anti-Corn Law League and lobbied for abolition of the slave trade, there was increased campaigning for greater *gender* equality from the mid-nineteenth century. In 1857 the *Englishwoman’s Journal* began. Two years later Harriet Martineau published *Female Industry* and the Society for Employment of Women was founded. The following year the Victoria Printing Press opened which published only women’s writing. The failure of the 1867 Reform Bill to include women, despite intense campaigning by the philosopher and Member of Parliament, John Stuart Mill, prompted some to greater political activity. Lydia Becker and Jessie Boucheret, for example,

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79 Moscucci 1990, 34.
80 Jordanova 1989, 42.
81 Gleadle 2001; Gleadle and Richardson 2000; Mellor 2000; Midgley 1992; Rogers 2000; Yeo 1998.

founded the Women's Suffrage Journal. Mill himself subsequently published *The Subjection of Women* (1869).

These developments show the ideology of gendered spheres, with women confined to domestic interests and men to the public world, could be as much rhetoric as actuality; the practical reality could be very different to the discourse surrounding it. Indeed, a continued emphasis on separate roles may reflect, as Colley and Gleadle suggest, women's increased, rather than decreased, public presence. It could be a reaction, to some extent, against those thought to be transgressing accepted gender stereotypes, an attempt to counter women who were actually entering into a male preserve and simultaneously abdicating their perceived feminine role.[82]

Historians have also shown women used precisely those qualities associated with femininity, such as selflessness, caring, nurturing and philanthropy, to argue that women be given positions of influence. Some women maintained that a virtuous female influence would improve the conduct and morality of wider society.[83] Women were increasingly taking these allegedly feminine domestic virtues and applying them to civic and social causes. Clearly the issue of 'separate spheres' was more complex than being merely a reactionary discourse; women used the very attributes associated with guardianship of the home, and took them into the outside world.

Even though they publicly worked for charities or community projects, many middle-class women continued to value their dominion within the house, exerting power and influence in both public and private spheres. As seen in mountaineering and exploration, women often used outward signs of stereotypical femininity as a way of straddling two apparently opposing positions, thereby gaining access to both. It is important to recall, however, that women were not necessarily united. Some women, for example, opposed the

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[82] Colley 1992, 273–4, 280–1; Gleadle 2001, 164; Vickery 1993.
[83] Levine 1990.

repeal of the Contagious Diseases (CD) acts, or had no desire for greater educational opportunities or their own enfranchisement.[84]

Women's increasing ability to contest and undermine prevailing ideas of gendered roles occurred across a wide range of contexts – the family, law, literature and work. The challenge to notions of physicality, independence and exercise, by women mountaineers, continued this subversive trend. As with other areas, women's actions were often hidden and difficult to see at first glance. They sat behind the more publicised activity of men who held the reins of power and influence. Only careful historical scholarship since the 1970s has begun to unearth the many and varied ways in which women in the nineteenth century were active, in a myriad of forms, outside the domestic sphere.[85] This thesis continues in this vein to explore the agency of women themselves.

2.3. Women, exercise and sport.

Much orthodox medical advice for most of the Victorian period recommended that women refrained from *excessive* exercise in order to preserve their perceived finite energy reserves, deemed essential for normal 'biological functions'.[86] What 'excessive' meant, of course, was open to debate, but the idea of doctors imposing a 'correct' level of physical activity applied only to healthy women; it was rarely ordered for healthy men. Numerous doctors believed menstruation, with its perceived drain on energy, to be responsible for many women's health issues, both physical and mental.[87] These medical views are considered in detail in chapter three, but clearly had the potential to affect women's engagement with sport and strenuous activity.

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[84] Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was against CD acts repeal, Eliza Lynn Linton opposed excessive education and Octavia Hill was against female suffrage.
[85] Delamont and Duffin 1978; Delap 2011; Gleadle 2001; Fraser 2014; Johnston 2013;Langland 1992; Levine 1990; Liddington 1978;Morgan 1997; Thompson 1999a; Twycross-Martin 1996; Vicinus 1972.
[86] Tait, "The Hastings Essay Prize," *The British Medical Journal* 1, (1874): 733–36. Tilt, "Education Of Girls." *The British Medical Journal* 1 (1887): 751; Willoughby Francis Wade,"Clinical Lecture On The Relation Between Menstruation And The Chlorosis Of Young Women," *The British Medical Journal,* 2 (1872): 35–37, are a representative sample of typical articles found in the medical press of the time; For an overview of medical advice see Robbins 2008.
[87] Vertinsky 1990; Strange 2000 shows the problems of inmates of a Welsh asylum were frequently attributed to their menses.

Historian Patricia Vertinsky has argued that women, in the nineteenth century, were socialised by doctors to understand and comply with the risks and benefits of exercise as promoted in the medical literature.[88] Her argument is based on an analysis of medical advice and prescriptive writings but gives little room to the agency of women themselves. One reviewer legitimately questioned whether this approach could adequately serve as the evidence upon which to assess women's actual belief and behaviour.[89] Vertinsky's methodology is similarly criticised by Corfield who notes how public discourse or official advice can have little bearing on people's actions.[90] In this thesis I purposefully seek out women's own experiences and actions, focusing on what women *were doing* not on what they *were advised* to do.

Kathleen McCrone has traced the development of sport for girls in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Female education slowly began to emulate various aspects of boy's public schools where success in games, after 1850, became almost more important than intellectual pursuits. [91] Girls were introduced to sport in such a way as not to challenge the perceived differences between men and women. Rigorous exercise, McCrone writes, was associated with manliness, whilst weakness was a sign of gentility.[92] Competition, public shows of dominance and conquering were all qualities associated as masculine traits. Consequently, women's sport was not only 'moderate' but it also took place privately away from the public gaze in the safety of home, school or, once the Oxbridge women's colleges were created, within their grounds.

James Mangan has written of how robust fitness for women was seen as vulgar: exercise was fine as long as it was perceived as genteel and not too extreme.[93] Charles Kingsley's concern that the pale, etiolated young women he saw in London needed 'to copy … Greek physical training' to combat ' the downward tendencies of [their] physique' did not stretch to advocating games and sport;

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88 Vertinsky 1990, 15–16.
89 Morantz-Sanchez 1996.
90 Corfield 1997, 253.
91 McCrone 1984.
92 McCrone 1984, 100.
93 Mangan 2006.

dancing and singing would suffice.[94] The qualities to be nurtured and explained to parents, who might otherwise be concerned for their daughters, were fitness and character, not the 'manly' displays of power and domination encouraged in boy's schools.[95] Competition between girl's schools did not become widespread until the late 1890s. Mangan further describes how dependent, genteel wives and daughters were emblematic of the status and success of their husbands and fathers; something that could put additional constraints on any aspirations middle-class affluent women might have had to experience strenuous exercise.[96]

Describing the increased acceptance of women's exercise in the early twentieth century, McCrone writes that 'by 1914 the granddaughters of 1860 were able to bicycle and climb mountains.' She clearly is unaware that many 'grandmothers' had been climbing for the previous fifty years. Accounts of nineteenth-century women's sport frequently overlook or give just passing reference to mountaineering.[97] Climbing is rarely considered a 'sport', or at least not for women.

Ruth Robbins warns against accepting the view of middle-class women as outlined by these historians. She provides several literary examples of 'rebellious' women and highlights that the view typified by the poet and critic Coventry Patmore (1823-1896), renowned for his poem 'Angel in the House' and the doctor William Acton (1813-1875) were seen, even at the time, as extreme.[98] This is a view shared by historians Michael Mason, Peter Gay and Jane Robinson.[99] Women, then as now, were not a homogeneous group. The plethora of advice manuals on health and exercise may have existed exactly because women were *not* complying with society's demands.[100] This would seem to have some credibility. Conduct and health literature often maintained the advice they

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[94] Kingsley 1880.
[95] McCrone 1984, 108–114.
[96] Mangan 2006, 52.
[97] Guttmann 1991, 79–105; Williams 2014, 11.
[98] Robbins 2008, 3–7. This was a narrative poem that idealised the Victorian woman as someone who selflessly served her children and was submissive to her husband. It became increasingly popular in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The "Angel in the House" was used by Thomas Hardy to describe Thomasin Yeobright in *Return of the Native* contrasting her with Eustachia Vye, its antithesis.
[99] Gay 1984a, 4:313–315; Mason 1994, 195–6; Robinson 1990.
[100] Robbins 2008, 7.

promoted was natural for women; it aided and supported their biological function. This immediately raises the question, if it was so 'natural' why was an advice manual necessary at all - surely it should have been intuitive? Moreover, buying and reading books were and are two very different things; simply because many were sold does not necessarily mean this reflected women's thinking. What women actually did provides more powerful and convincing evidence than this.

This is a view championed by Catriona Parratt. She surveyed articles in the women's publication *Womanhood.* This magazine contains several examples of upper and middle-class women who regularly went fox and otter hunting; activities that involved physical exertion and risk, often in poor weather. It is difficult to identify these women with the submissive individuals, who avoided extreme physicality, painted by historians such as Hargreaves (with whom Parratt takes issue).[101] Parratt is one of the few historians who recognises that women were substantially involved in mountaineering in the nineteenth century, although even she locates this as occurring after 1890: in reality, as this study shows, women made ascents of major Alpine peaks from 1854.[102]

Some historians, by neglecting to consider how exercise, including walking, fitted into middle-class women's lives, perpetuate the stereotype of the sheltered, weak female who abhorred physical exertion. Historian Lydia Murdoch's recent *Daily Life of Victorian Women* (2014), for example, only mentions the body to discuss well-rehearsed biological determinist arguments. Despite purportedly dealing with 'daily life' in which walking and exercise clearly played a part, no mention is made of either. Such approaches entrench oversimplified conceptions of gender. Psychologist Cordelia Fine has shown the enduring nature of stereotypes. They offer safety and are hard to change; standing out from the crowd, after all, is uncomfortable.[103] However, to contribute new or meaningful historical work interrogating stereotypes, like that of the delicate, exercise-avoiding middle-class Victorian woman, is crucial.

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101 Hargreaves 1994.
102 Parratt 1989.
103 Fine 2011.

2.4 The Body, Gender and Theory

The work of anthropologist Mary Douglas is extremely useful in pointing out the intimate and important relationship that exists between the physical body and the social body. Douglas has shown that where there is a very structured society with well-defined roles, as there was in the formalised culture of the nineteenth century with its distinct entities of class and gender, there are similarly greater restrictions on how an individual's body can behave or be portrayed.[104] For instance, a body's posture, the way it is dressed, how it moves and the people it associates with are all prescribed or restricted by the society it is part of. In the nineteenth century, for example, middle-class women were expected to wear skirts and corsets, refrain from vigorous exercise, rest at certain times of the month and not travel alone. Such control of the body maintains hierarchies, distinctions and differences. The interpretation of the female body, its physiology and supposed abilities or inabilities became yet another form of societal control.

Occupying such a pivotal role it is unsurprising the body – and what it symbolised or portrayed – had the potential to become contested. It was used to support, as well as undermine, mainstream beliefs and values. It could become the basis upon which people interpreted behaviour as 'acceptable'. The body is one thing it is impossible for society, or the state, to have absolute control over. Pressure can be exerted, but ultimately the individual has the freedom to conform or rebel. Women's use and control of their bodies can be seen as an opportunity to undermine or corroborate society's mores; by analysing when, where and how women acted, the degree of acceptance or rejection of conventional 'ways of being' can be gauged. The use of the body and the physicality inherent in mountaineering provide an ideal analytical lens for this task.

The control, manipulation and representation of women and their bodies invaded almost every aspect of Victorian women's lives - from the physical space they occupied, to suitable roles and jobs, to health, education, deportment, mannerisms, and their innate 'nature'. For middle and upper class women their body demarcated, constrained and identified them in almost everything they did.

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[104] Douglas 1996, 65–72.

Obviously there were variations in the degree and manner in which this was experienced but few women were completely free from these restrictions. This has a special resonance for women climbers. In such a physical activity as mountaineering the perception, appearance, utilisation and experience of the body was of fundamental importance.

The cultural construction of gender has been reconsidered in the well-known work of one of the most celebrated contemporary philosophers, Judith Butler.[105] She shows how the physical body can serve as a vehicle to express or perform gender and she is sceptical of any claim that the body possesses, of itself, some real gendered essence. For Butler, gender has no immutable materiality but exists as an idea or even, she suggests, as a fantasy.[106] For her, gender is nebulous, fluid and given existence only by reiteration of norms that, over time, have developed an association with male or female. Certain gestures, movements, displays, enactments and language, by their continued and repeated use, become symbolic and representative of gender such that eventually they possess associations independent of any physical body.[107] Hence, in the nineteenth century, demurring from competition, needing or at least taking more rest, dressing, exercising and moving in a certain way was part of a feminine aura. Callisthenics, for example, became associated with women whilst the vigorous, free-ranging activities such as mountaineering, running or rowing wore the mantle of masculinity.[108]

Butler's idea that gender has no fixed boundaries is helpful in undermining binary divisions between male and female and between homosexual and heterosexual. Such destruction of any hard lines demarking gender provides a freedom and space for us to situate nineteenth-century women climbers.

Whilst Butler's work is clearly useful, her privileging of discourse over materiality – where the physical body plays a less important role – also invites debate. Toril Moi and Iris Young's writings on Simone De Beauvoir provides a

[105] Butler 2006, 4–7.
[106] Butler 2006, 71.
[107] Butler 1993, 12–13.
[108] Cantlie 1883.

counterpoint to such assumptions where, unlike Butler, the *experience* of the body and its evident materiality is paramount.[109] Like Butler, De Beauvoir rejects biological determinism but unlike Butler the 'whole body' experience is viewed as inextricable from all that is 'woman.' De Beauvoir's classic statement – 'The body is not a thing it is a *situation*; it is our grasp on the world and a sketch of our projects'– encapsulates her view.[110] Such a declaration resonates strongly with the experience of women climbers for whom the materiality of the body was fundamental to their 'project' as mountaineers.

De Beauvoir's 'situated body' needs some explanation; it arises from the conjunction of two different aspects - incontestable facts and ontological freedom. A body has specific undeniable attributes, for example, anatomical sex, race, comportment, age, hair colour, facial features and so on. It is also subject to a certain environment; for example, a specific country, urban or rural, a distinct language and a unique social setting with cultures that are more or less restrictive, occupied by people and buildings in a precise historical moment. These are inescapable facts. People, however - in this case specifically women – have agency to construct themselves in the light of these differing facts. Their ontological freedom is captured in the ventures they choose to engage with. Women's 'projects' may be climbing mountains, writing, campaigning, dressing differently, refashioning relationships or, by contrast, choosing to remain dependent, not challenging society's mores or even opposing women's public activities.

As Moi succinctly writes, 'To claim that the body is a situation is to acknowledge that the meaning of a woman's body is bound up with the way she uses her freedom.'[111] The 'situated' or the 'lived' body enables a multiplicity of meanings and experiences to evolve. It is not concerned merely with oppressed or oppressive gender, as Butler concentrates on, but considers woman as a whole, not just as a sexed being. Such an approach provides space and explanation for a

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109 I am particularly indebted to both these scholars for clearly discussing De Beauvoir's work, Moi 1999, 3–120; Young 2005b, 12–26.
110 Butler 1993, 5–49; De Beauvoir 2011, 46.
111 Moi 1999, 65.

multiplicity of situations, for example, for women to be simultaneously climbers, to enjoy strenuous exercise, be authoritative, independent and behave at times outside social mores, but also to be mothers, concerned about their femininity and appearance, and to be supporters or opponents of women's suffrage. Beauvoir grounds *the experience of the body* and *the way it is used* as something fundamental to women's freedom in a way that is less noticeable in Butler's work.[112]

Philosopher and English scholar Susan Bordo also brings the material body rather than discourse to centre stage.[113] Although agreeing with Butler that the perception and appearance of the body is culturally constructed, she differs by stressing the importance of the physical, material body in resisting hegemonic norms. She argues that the bodies of the abject or excluded, by highlighting their segregation, difference or marginalisation from the dominant order, can function as sites to encourage a revision of the existing situation.[114] This may seem unrelated to female climbers but women, generally, in the nineteenth century were a relatively excluded group whose activities were commonly proscribed and limited. By displaying extreme physicality in a feminine body women climbers enacted a perceived paradox, contradicting the view that strenuous activity or a specific geographic space were exclusively male.

Butler and Bordo agree that the only way to affect any change in a hegemonic situation is to 'locate strategies of subversive repetition within cultural constructions of gender.'[115] Bordo, however, differs from Butler in stressing that the destabilisation such action creates, is effective mainly because of its definite materiality and praxis, and less because of the discourse surrounding it. Women climbers' willingness to be seen repeatedly on the high peaks to some extent enacted such a 'subversive repetition.'

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112 Butler 1993, 5–49.
113 Bordo 1998; Bordo 2003.
114 Bordo 1998, 84.
115 Butler 2006, 145–7.

Subsequent discussions of women's climbing use the work of all these theoreticians. I particularly want to underline, however, that the body always has a concrete material presence; it exists in time and place, with a historical view and perspective. Whilst inevitably situated within the culture of the period, women climbers would have had little effect by merely entering into a discourse about mountaineering. It was not writing, talking or theorising but their lived experience, in an activity that was physical, strenuous and earthy, that carried weight. The knowledge of the material body moving in a particular environment is the matrix which sculpts the activities of all human beings - none more so than in mountaineering.[116]

3. Mountaineering

'Mountaineering' may appear self-explanatory but for the purposes of this study it requires clarification. As I am concerned with women's approach to physicality and exercise, the expression 'mountaineer' is used for anyone who undertook an ascent, under their own power, to gain a summit, col, ridge or mountain refuge involving a vertical climb of more than 1500 metres. This would apply, for example, to someone who began in Chamonix (1035m) and climbed the relatively low Brevent (2525m) – a height gain of 1490m or went up to the higher Grand Mulets hut (3051m). 1500 metres is admittedly an arbitrary measure, but I use it because even this minimum level demanded *at least* four hours sustained, hard physical work. When middle-class women were advised against any strenuous exercise even this relatively modest (in mountaineering terms) level of activity could be seen as transgressive. At this lower height, there was often no need for ropes, or demanding rock climbing. As excursions developed in difficulty, however, walking and scrambling became correspondingly more exacting, sometimes lasting substantially more than twelve hours.[117] The most demanding expeditions stretched across several days and nights. They involved the negotiation of crevasses, ice walls, rock faces and nights spent at high altitude often in the open. 'Mountaineering' in this thesis,

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[116] For further consideration of the interplay between materialism & discourse see Gonzalez-Arnal, Jagger, and Lennon 2013, 2–28; Hekman 1998.
[117] See, for example, the excursions detailed in *Chamber's Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts* 1877, 533.

therefore, covers a broad range of activities from demanding hikes below the snow line to attempts on the most difficult summits.

3.1.Historiography of Mountaineering.

The first histories of mountaineering were written by climbers, few of whom were professional historians.[118] They looked back over past decades with a mixture of insight, prejudice, nostalgia and emotion to document the changes they had observed and the successes and failures experienced. Leslie Stephen, creator of the *Dictionary of National Biography* (DNB), recounted not merely the arcane detail of mountaineering but also explored the meaning, memory and aesthetics of the Alps.[119] William Coolidge, an American-born Oxford don, became the self-appointed historian of mountaineering in the nineteenth century.[120] His studies often extended beyond climbing to include such diverse topics as the origin and character of the indigenous people, Alpine politics, geology, flora and fauna.[121] Other people concentrated on mountain guides,[122] specific geographical areas,[123] or biographies of climbers.[124] The histories of mountaineering written in this period were essentially that of AC men; women are largely excluded.

This male history of mountaineering was repeated in the 1950s when the centenary of the 'Golden Age' of mountaineering (1854-1865) and the founding of the AC (1857) roughly coincided with British success on Everest (1953). This prompted a new outpouring of climbing histories, that in keeping with contemporary events, were celebratory and whiggish in nature.[125] Women climbers do not feature in these heroic accounts.

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118 Coolidge 1889a; Coolidge 1908; Cunningham 1887;De Beer 1932; Dent 1892; Gribble 1899; Hudson and Kennedy 1856; Lunn 1944; Mathews 1898; Mumm 1923; Stephen 1904 are a representative sample.
119 Stephen 1904.
120 Coolidge's archive at the Zentralbibliotech, Zurich contains extensive correspondence from most of the notable climbers of the day, male and female.
121 Coolidge 1908.
122 Cunningham 1887.
123 Coolidge 1889a; Freshfield 1875; Mathews 1898.
124 Mumm 1923.
125 Brown and De Beer 1957; Clark and Pyatt 1957; Hunt 1953; Irving 1955; Lunn 1957; Noyce 1954.

Ronald Clark's book *The Victorian Mountaineers* (1953) was one of the first to attempt an explanation for the nineteenth-century surge in interest in the Alps and to consider a few of the women pioneers of mountaineering. Scientific advances with the subsequent challenges this created for religion, he claimed, stimulated an interest in the mountains both as places for active enquiry and quiet contemplation.[126] It is an unapologetic celebration of the Victorian period. The book is almost a distillation of maverick individualism, patriotism and self-sufficiency rolled into one; qualities that were lionised by Victorian society as stereotypical, if idealistic, male aspirations.[127] The coverage of women's successes as climbers is superficial and frequently coloured by gendered stereotypes. Notable mountaineering achievements by Margaret Jackson, Mary Mummery and Lily Bristow, for example, go unrecognised while Mary Straton's status as an heiress is highlighted.[128] Women are included more as portrayals of interesting and entertaining characters than serious climbers. Indeed Clark creates a picture of the whole mountaineering community as consisting more of eccentrics than people representative of their time.[129]

Clare Eliane Engel's *A History of Mountaineering in the Alps* (1950) is refreshing in the inclusion of French, Swiss, Italian, German as well as British climbers.[130] Her discussion of women mountaineers accesses a wider number of sources than Clark but, like a later account by mountaineer Cicely Williams, there is no attempt to relate or contextualise their activities within wider society.[131] Williams was the first person to write solely about women climbers.[132] She touches on early female mountaineers, but mainly charts the changes that occurred during the twentieth century. In this period women were gradually accepted as men's equals in a climbing party and guideless, all-female, groups began exploring not only the Alps but also the Caucasus and Himalayas.

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126 Clark 1953, 17–18.
127 Deane 2014, 4–5; Gay 1984b, 1:46–47; Smiles 1871.
128 Margaret Jackson was the first person to traverse the Jungfrau & Finsteraarhorn in winter. Mary Mummery was in the party that first climbed the Teufelsgrat ridge in the Taschhorn. Lily Bristow was the first *woman* to lead *men* up an Alpine climbing pitch with a new route on the Grepon.
129 Clark 1953, 16.
130 Engel 1950.
131 The Ladies Alpine Club was founded in 1907 not 1912 as noted in Engel 1950, 147.
132 Williams 1973.

More recent work, by historians rather than climbers, has focussed specifically on women. Carol Osborne analysed women's participation in climbing mainly through the creation of climbing clubs that were formed in the early years of the twentieth century.[133] Consequently, she focuses on a slightly later period than this thesis concentrates on. Moreover, Osborne is interested in the institutional history of clubs whilst I am concerned with individual women's connection with physicality and the mountain environment. She convincingly argues, however, that one reason for women's relative invisibility within climbing, in the second half of the nineteenth century, is the lack of a club structure to which women could relate or demonstrate their presence.[134]

Jill Maclachlan has studied Anglo- American women mountaineers in their role as authors, artists and photographers in several different mountain ranges; her concern is in tracing their cultural and autobiographical construction.[135] Of necessity, this has restricted her to a self-selected group of women who were not averse to publicity. More typically the average female climber largely refrained from such overt self-promotion, as will be discussed later in this work. Whilst informative to some degree the texts and pictures chosen say little about the general quantitative or qualitative nature of women's climbing, which is something central to this thesis. Moreover, the choice of several mountaineering venues, rather than one, complicates arguments about the cultural backdrop against which women's activities occurred.

Unlike Maclachlan's study, Malcolm Craig's more recent *Shackles of Convention* (2013) is based on much archival work. In contrast to Osborne he focuses on the earliest women climbers in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is not the work of a historian, however, but of an interested mountaineer. As a result this account, though splendid, lacks any systematic effort to draw connections or meaning between climbing and the social and cultural context of the period.

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133 Osborne 2004.
134 Osborne 2004, 127.
135 Maclachlan 2004; Brown 2002 also considers early American female climbers &, superficially, a few of the more prominent British women mountaineers.

Ann Colley is one of the few scholars who recognises the hidden, and largely ignored, presence of female climbers.[136] Her well-researched study, *Victorians in the Mountains; Sinking of the Sublime* (2010) suggests that the frequency with which women were seen and involved in mountaineering was one of several factors that contributed to weakening the notion of the sublime. The latter, she asserts, had been traditionally associated with masculine power and domination.[137] It was, she maintains, precisely because women were actively involved in climbing and commonly seen on the mountain that the gendered idea of the sublime weakened. Whilst I agree with Colley about the prevalence of women in the Alps it seems difficult to be certain about the demise of the sublime given its subjective nature. The letters of several women and men show continued use both of the word and its expressions into the 1870s and beyond; interpreting exact meanings, however, seems fraught with difficulty.

Peter Hansen is an acknowledged authority on the Alpine Club and the development of mountaineering from the late eighteenth century.[138] Unsurprisingly, given the all-male nature of the AC, he concentrates predominantly on British middle-class men in whom, he maintains, imperialism was an important motivating factor in luring them to 'conquer' alpine summits: something that, despite my indebtedness to his research, I challenge in chapter two.[139]

In his early work Hansen acknowledged that some women were mountaineers but surprisingly grouped those who climbed in the 1860s, for example Meta Brevoort, Anna and Ellen Pigeon, with those in the 1890s such as Gertrude Bell, calling them 'representatives of the so-called New Woman.' Brevoort, however, died in 1876 long before the notion of 'new women' arose.[140] Hansen also maintains women climbed to assert 'their independence from traditional femininity' and, until the end of the century, 'could only experience mountain

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136 See also Gifford 2013.
137 Colley 2010, 32.
138 Hansen 1991; Hansen 1995; Hansen 1996; Hansen 1999; Hansen 2013a.
139 Hansen 1991, 13, 145–8; Hansen 1996.
140 Hansen 1991, 311 The concept 'New Women' arose in the late nineteenth century. It was a feminist ideology centring on women pursuing more active roles in society and employment - free from male domination. Ibsen's play Hedda Gabler in 1890 gave the idea of 'new women' much publicity. Its relevance to this study will be discussed more fully in chapter 6.

climbing vicariously' through male relatives.[141] If his claims are correct the activities of women like Emily Hornby, Sophia Holworthy, Frederica and Katherine Plunket and the Pigeon sisters, who never climbed with men other than guides they employed, needs explaining.[142] If most women remained in the valleys why are many women's signatures found in *führerbücher*? Every acknowledgment of Lucy Walker's undeniable climbing ability by her contemporaries also stresses her otherwise stereotypical feminine qualities – an excellent hostess, needlewoman and custodian of the home – a far cry from the mien of a 'new woman'.[143]

Others have also overlooked women's involvement with alpinism claiming either that they began mountaineering after 1880, or that they rarely climbed because it was an anathema to AC members. Fleming's populist book devoted merely two paragraphs out of 361 pages to the subject of women. Keenlyside's account of mountaineering pioneers contains only a brief mention of women's contribution and even so contains numerous inaccuracies.[144] These are typical examples of the way some writers have perpetuated a distorted gendered discourse surrounding mountaineering: the tide may, however, be starting to turn.

Paul Readman's recent study of leading mountaineer Cecil Slingsby is a refreshing change to the common view that the mountains were a male preserve or that imperialist intent was a major motivating factor for many men. Readman highlights Slingsby's strong encouragement of women to climb and that his emotional relationship with the landscape was a greater motive for mountaineering than anything promoted by empire.[145] A 2013 issue of *Sport in History* focussed specifically on gender and climbing in which Roche asked whether nineteenth-century women mountaineers challenged a 'male hegemony' and Anderson showed how working- class women, at the end of the nineteenth century, began to find leisure in the mountains through the Co-

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141 Hansen 1991, 13, 45.
142 Holworthy 1885; Hornby 1907; Pigeon 1885.
143 Gardiner 1917; Whymper 1885.
144 Fleming 2000, 320–321; Keenlyside 1975, 63; Ring 2000, 104.
145 Readman 2014.

operative Holiday Association.[146] Others have focussed on women's relationship with the Swiss and French Alpine clubs and more recently on how Nepalese women's mountaineering developed in the twentieth century.[147]

By bringing women out of the shadows of mountaineering history this thesis complements, and in various respects extends, the arguments of Colley and Osborne. Although, as will be clear, the present study challenges some of Hansen's claims, his work on the AC is an invaluable resource that no historian of mountaineering should ignore. This thesis attempts to use some of that information to reconceptualise the gender politics of climbing; it seeks not just to elicit the female experience but also to embed it within a wider climbing community. Where Hansen views mountaineering as a monolithic masculine pastime this thesis shows a diversity of experience; it demonstrates that women's presence altered how men viewed or reacted to the mountains – and not always in a negative sense. It suggests the historical analysis of male climbing in the nineteenth century needs to register not only the presence of women in Alpinism, but also the complex contexts and diverse meanings that attached to climbing for both sexes throughout this period.

4. Social Class

Mountaineering incurred expense; it presupposed time away from work, home and sometimes the family. It required knowledge, confidence and the wherewithal to organise the, at times, complex six-to-eight week Alpine tours; this ensured climbing was only possible for the socially privileged. While a few climbers were aristocratic most mountaineers in the nineteenth century, male or female, came from the upper middle class.[148]

However, what exactly does that expression 'middle class' mean? It has proved notoriously difficult to define with alternative designations of 'middle class' continuing to be debated by historians. The belief, which developed in the 1960s, that the combined effect of the French and industrial revolutions not only made

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[146] Anderson 2013; Roche 2013.
[147] Gugglberger 2015; Ottogali-Mazzacavallo 2004; Wirz 2007.
[148] Lord Francis Douglas who died on the 1st ascent of the Matterhorn, 1865 and Earl Minto, Viceroy of India are two notable aristocrats. See Mumm 1923 for further examples

the middle class, but also made it a dominant force, has been challenged more recently by discussions in favour of a continued hierarchy of classes in which the aristocracy remained a kind of pinnacle.[149] Nevertheless there is agreement that the middle class became increasingly politicised during the nineteenth century, with the combined effect of Chartism and the 1832 Reform Bill.[150]

As Simon Gunn claims, 'the strength of the term [middle class] resides in its chameleon quality.'[151] There was no homogenous unified group but a plurality of social entities with great variations in levels of wealth, jobs, interests, religion and status.[152] There were no firm boundaries – they overlapped and coalesced. The range extended from skilled artisans at the lower end to landed gentry at the higher. In 1866 *The Daily Telegraph* journalist, Thornton Hunt, characterised the situation by declaring, 'There is no country in the world where there is so little practical separation between the several classes.'[153]

Despite these difficulties in locating a precise definition, most historians would agree that the nineteenth century witnessed an unprecedented expansion of a class which, through its involvement with paid work in one form or another, stood in stark contrast to the leisured aristocracy at one extreme, and the hard manual toil of the working class, at the other. The category included newly affluent businessmen, the 'professions', civil servants and industrialists. Although the middle class also included shopkeepers, clerks and small workshop owners, it was from the former grouping that most climbers' families, women and men, originated. Hansen's work documenting the occupations of AC members from 1857-1900 (Table 1), illustrates this.[154] Although referring only to men it is relevant to this work because many women climbers were related to AC members and even those who were unconnected to the club came from similar backgrounds.

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149 Briggs 1965; Burn 1964; Hobsbawm 1975.
150 Cannadine 1998; Feldman and Lawrence 2011, 1–23; Gunn 2000; Thompson 1988; Wahrman 1995.
151 Gunn 2000, 64.
152 Cannadine 1998, 60; Tosh 2007, 13; Wahrman 1995.
153 Cannadine 1998, 96.
154 Hansen 1991, 113.

TABLE 1	Alpine Club Members' Occupations 1857-1890
Business men	19.7%
Law	23.9%
Civil Service	8.6%
Church	7.0%
Teaching	11.8%
Military	4.1%
Medicine	5.00%
Arts	5.2%
Gentlemen	5.3%
Science	5.3%
Unknown	3.2%
Other	0.7%

Although largely belonging to the same social class, the membership was an eclectic mix.[155] It included scientists such as John Tyndall, David Forbes and Michael Faraday; industrialists like Charles and Lawrence Pilkington, Frank and Horace Walker; and bankers such as William Baring, Felix Schuster and Alfred Hoare. Many clergymen and their families, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Bristol, were members as were headmasters and teachers from leading public schools. Prominent members of the judiciary such as Alfred Wills and Henry Freshfield, diplomats and civil servants such as Earl Minto, Viceroy of India, A W Moore, secretary to Randolph Churchill and John Ball, Irish commissioner, botanist and author of a favoured Alpine guidebook joined the club. Publishers William Longman, John Murray, and William Spottiswoode were members as were man of letters Leslie Stephen and art critic John Ruskin. There was barely an aspect of professional, political or commercial life that did not have a representative within the climbing community.

Although AC membership was exclusively male and did not represent all climbers it was nevertheless symbolic of the class and people who travelled to

155 Mumm 1923.

the Alps during this period. Women climbers came from this same social and economic background - one that enjoyed a level of wealth sufficient to enjoy a tour of the Alps. This is unsurprising given that many climbed with relatives – fathers, sisters, brothers and cousins. In the case of Jane Freshfield and Meta Brevoort it was women rather than men who were responsible for introducing the family to climbing.

Although those who visited the mountains came broadly from similar backgrounds, within that group there were frequent differences of opinion and even on occasions open disagreement.[156] Whilst many, such as the mountaineer Frances Havergal and the numerous 'climbing clergy', were establishment Anglicans many were non-conformists and came from evangelical, Quaker and Unitarian backgrounds.[157] John Tyndall, a member of the X-Club, a group of scientists that publicly supported Darwin's theory of evolution, openly tried to separate religion from science. Despite differences, mountaineers shared a love of the mountains and a certain determination of character that remained undeterred by the difficulties and hardships necessary to walking, climbing and exploring the Alps. As a group, they were used to achieving and enjoying respect in their social, business or professional lives. They had the confidence to question, were often inquisitive by nature and subscribers to the Victorian habit of collecting, exploring and investigation. All these characteristics they brought with them, with varying degrees of success, to their 'scrambles in the Alps'.

Whilst politics, as mentioned earlier, through the effects of the reform acts and chartism, played an important part in the development of the middle class, Gunn, using Bourdieu's idea of symbolic capital, stresses that involvement in a wide variety of cultural and educational interests can be a more reliable marker of affiliation to this class.[158] In towns and cities, for example, the middle class played pivotal roles in literary, scientific and artistic groups forming libraries,

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156 Leslie Stephen held strong views on religion, use of guides, tourists, and had an ambiguous reaction to women climbers as will be discussed in chapter 2. He clashed with Ruskin over the aesthetics of mountain travel. Tyndall & Forbes were involved in well publicised arguments over glaciation.

157 Alfred Wills was a Unitarian, Robert Spence Watson, John Birkbeck, & the Fox Tucketts were Quakers. Ruskin and Stephen came from Evangelical backgrounds, which both later rejected.

158 Gunn 2005; Kidd and Nicholls 1999; Morris 1990.

philosophical and natural history societies throughout Britain.[159] Those who climbed shared this middle-class taste for education and culture; something poet and cultural critic Mathew Arnold famously called 'sweetness and light.'[160] As already highlighted, several men were scientists, writers, teachers and lawyers. Most women climbers, in this study, were fluent in French and German with Italian being a common addition.[161] Knowledge of geology, botany, theories of glaciation and natural history were commonplace. Mary de la Beche Nicholl was a keen lepidopterist and Fellow of the Entomological Society.[162] Katherine Richardson was a recognised water colourist and the journals of mountaineers Alfred Wills and Emily Hornby regularly contained lists of Alpine flora.[163] Elizabeth Spence-Watson's journal recounts her close involvement with the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

Being educated, contributing and attending societies and exhibitions and being recognised as belonging to a class that did such things engendered a certain self-confidence.[164] This self-confidence became embodied and displayed in the manners, styles, gestures and language used – a habitus, where culture was 'made body.'[165] It is reflected in the way climbers of either gender spoke condescendingly of 'tourists' and occasionally in the way they behaved with their guides. Women who organised their own expeditions characteristically displayed enormous self-confidence; arguably, it was possession of such self-belief that enabled climbers of either sex to achieve what they did. It was 'a way of being' learnt from birth that permeated the society they were immersed in. This shared habitus, Gunn convincingly suggests, was a central aspect of middle-class identity in the nineteenth century.[166]

5. Structure of Thesis

One of the aims of this study is to contextualise mountaineering and women's roles and contributions within it. Consequently, the first chapter considers the

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159 Gunn 2005, 34.
160 Arnold 1909, 4–33.
161 Crane 1881; Gardiner 1917; Holworthy 1885; Hornby 1907; Le Blond 1883.
162 Thomas 1979.
163 Wills 1858; Hornby 1907.
164 Baldick 1983, 59–85.
165 Bourdieu 1977; Lovell 2000.
166 Bourdieu 1977; Gunn 2005; Fowler 2000.

changing symbolism and cultural space and place of mountains through time. It explores how, as the peaks became sites of scientific enquiry, spiritual contemplation and places of leisure, previous visions of mountains as sites of terror and intrigue were usurped. The chapter provides an analysis of why and how the Alps became a popular destination for a wide variety of interests and people. Romanticism, the end of the Napoleonic wars, and contemporary influences provided by people such as the art critic John Ruskin and impresario Albert Smith are considered. The chapter summarises the beginnings of mountaineering up to 1854 – the beginning of a supposedly 'Golden Age' when most summits were first climbed. Improved transport and the development of organised tours enabled a greater range of people, particularly women, to experience the mountains. Although providing opportunities such developments also created a sense of social division between 'tourists' and 'travellers'. Consequently the mountains became, in some sense, a contested space.

Women climbers were part of a mountaineering community that was often close-knit. The Walker, Conway, and Gardiner families, for example, all lived in North West England and often met at social events both outside the Alpine season of June to September as well as within it.[167] Mountaineer Douglas Freshfield married fellow climber Leslie Stephen's sister-in-law. It was common for friendships made whilst mountaineering to become lifelong. Climbers Anna and Ellen Pigeon, for example, visited fellow mountaineer William Coolidge in his home in Grindelwald long after all their climbing careers were over.[168] To uncover how women related to, and were viewed by, fellow climbers it is essential to understand the men who constituted most of the mountaineering community; to see how they viewed themselves and their activities in the mountains. The second chapter draws out this thread and considers the multiple meanings and importance of manliness in the nineteenth century. It examines the role mountaineering played in this construction. Diaries, books, letters and articles, written by a selection of male climbers, are used to explore motivations, interests, and the sometimes complex relationships with both mountaineering and women.

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[167] Conway 1886b; Conway 1885.
[168] "Letter to William Coolidge."A. Pigeon, September 9th, 1896.

The next two chapters look specifically at women and their varied activities and expeditions in the Alps but from slightly different angles. Chapter three draws out the social and cultural pressures exerted on many middle-class women in this period. It then specifically analyses the social backgrounds of women climbers and explores what initially drew them to the Alps. It traces the often very gradual process by which women became involved in the physical pursuits of walking and climbing. Using case studies it follows the summer tours of a number of women who did not go to the Alps initially with the intention of climbing; they were not, as yet, acknowledged mountaineers. These show that for many the mountains had an unexpected effect – they made women realise they possessed far greater physical and psychological abilities than they had known before, simultaneously revealing a new horizon to freedom.

Chapter four, in contrast, looks at more purposeful mountaineering expeditions; at those women who went with the definite intention of climbing the highest peaks and passes in the Alps or exploring little known areas. These were not 'accidental' mountaineers, but women who went with the aim of getting the maximum from their four-to-eight week summer tour. The accomplishments of the principal women climbers are considered in some detail. Appended to the thesis are their climbing itineraries together with a detailed list of all currently known women's first ascents. These refute, head on, the notion that all middle-class women adhered to medical advice to restrict their exercise and weaken the concept of the high Alps as an exclusively male domain. The chapter focuses on the altitude, duration, quality and quantity of their climbs. In the nineteenth century, these expeditions were often more physically taxing than today, as will be explained. Privation, endurance and a willingness to deal with all weathers were necessary parts of the endeavour. The purpose of this chapter within the thesis is to provide a factual basis to women's mountaineering; to document the achievements of the most able female alpinists. Without understanding what climbing exactly involved it is difficult to discuss the related issues of femininity, motivation, identity or freedom that follow.

The negotiation of crevasses via narrow snow bridges, the waiting on steep ice walls whilst steps were cut and the glissading down slopes were all part of

mountaineering. Frugal or non-existent toileting facilities, unusual sleeping arrangements and the differing compositions of climbing parties were integral to the reality of nineteenth-century alpinism. If the previous chapter concentrated on *what* women climbed, chapter five considers *how.* It divides into two parts; the first looks at the *climbing body*, the detailed physical, kinaesthetic and emotional requirements and the second consider the dynamics of the *climbing group*. The interaction and relationship of female climbers to the male climbing community, including guides and porters, provide insight into women's sense of self as well as to the perception and mutability of gender roles within that specific social milieu. It suggests a reconsideration of the more familiar discursive gender analysis as seen, for example, in the notion of 'separate spheres.'

The final chapter brings together how climbing affected women's lives and their identity. It examines how the sense of freedom several women spoke of relate to how they saw themselves, the image they projected and how others perceived them. It uses a format to study identity proposed by sociologist Rogers Brubaker and historian Frederick Cooper. This allows for a more flexible, multi-dimensional and realistic construction of the various identities possessed by women climbers. Like all people female mountaineers had different personas depending on where they were and who or what was viewing them. For example, some might be seen as mothers, others as daughters, employers, climbers, friends, interpreters, wives, botanists, radicals, writers, painters or tourists. Public and private perceptions, politics and religion, dress, writing and representation, together with embodiment, nationalism, femininity and a sense of community all contribute to these different manifestations and are the focus of this chapter. Identity and motivation overlap because often the issues and interests that prompted women to visit the Alps were integral to their sense of who they were and their place in society.

The one thing that linked all the women who explored the Alps was their choice, quoted from Eliot at the start of this chapter, to 'walk high with sublimer dread rather than crawl in safety.' The mountains were not always seen as benign and it is with that issue this thesis commences.

Chapter 1. The Culture of Mountains & Development of Mountaineering

> 'And Men Go Abroad to Wonder at the Heights of the Mountains' – St Augustine (354 - 430 A.D)[1]

As Saint Augustine's declaration suggests, mountains have had an allure for mankind for millennia – a fascination seen in the Old Testament and the mythology of other civilisations.[2] The reasons for such a long lasting interest have not remained the same, however. The meaning and symbolism of mountains have shifted as different cultures developed and evolved.

1.Culture of Mountains

Mountains have been seen as wondrous but also as objects both of terror and exploration; places to consider life's existential questions as well as spaces of political conflict; metaphors for the religious journey and also areas of agricultural toil; locations of respite and rejuvenation; places to avoid as well as to escape to. Poets, writers, artists, philosophers and musicians have all, at some time, drawn inspiration from mountains.[3] Naturalists, botanists and from the eighteenth century, geologists spent increasing time amongst them.[4] The various meanings and uses of mountains have exercised scholars from several different disciplines.[5] For this thesis it is the part played by mountains to challenge and change people, over time, that is important. As will be shown, opinions about the construction, purpose and aestheticism of mountains have fluctuated and often been contradictory.

Given the changing roles, and different status ascribed to mountains through time, three obvious questions arise for anyone concerned with the history of

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1 Pilkington 1943, 229.

2 Bernbaum 1998 considers places such as Mount Olympus in Greek mythology and Mount Kailash in Hinduism.

3 For a detailed overview of different religious & emotional interpretations and uses of mountains see Schama 1995, 385–513.

4 Gessner 1937; Forbes 1859; Forbes 1843; Saussure 1786; O'Connor 2007.

5 For an excellent study of the cultural, political, social and environmental history of the world's mountains see Mathieu 2011; see also Besson 2010 which is a compilation of essays on literature, myths & meanings of mountains from the 16th century to the present. Also Beattie 2006; Bernbaum 2006; Mathieu 2006; Neuhaus 2012.

Alpine climbing and women's position within it. First, what were the cultural influences affecting the way people viewed and understood mountains in the Victorian period? Why and how did mountaineering develop and expand from the mid nineteenth century rather than at any previous time? Finally, what encouraged people, in greater numbers and from a wider social sphere than previously, to embark on European travel during this period, and in particular to visit the Alps? It is these three interlinking areas that this chapter focuses upon.

1.1.Religion and Mythology.

In Western Europe Christianity has been, of course, the dominant cultural force for two thousand years. In this religion, the symbolism of mountains is particularly strong; they were the sites for such pivotal events as Christ's temptation (Luke 4,1-13), Moses receipt of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20, 1-17), Christ's crucifixion (Mark 15, 22) and the Sermon on the Mount (Mathew 5, 1). Other Christian literature also makes extensive use of mountains. Dante's fourteenth century Mount Purgatory is a testing ground before paradise is finally reached on the summit. John Bunyan's Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) describes the 'Delectable Mountains', an expression borrowed by Harriet Beecher Stowe in her own Alpine travels.[6] Cleric John Donne (1572-1631) differed again describing hills and valleys as the 'warts and pockholes…of the earth.'[7] Imagined or real, mountains occupied an often contradictory and shifting position: sometimes they provided a view towards heaven, yet at other times were places of temptation, harbingers of evil spirits or desolate landscapes to be avoided.

Mountains had an aura of mystery, even of foreboding. From the tenth century, monasteries and hospices were built in the valleys and on the main mountain passes; they offered both spiritual support to travellers and protection from the perceived dangers of dragons, robbers, evil spirits and violent storms.[8] It has been suggested the increasing presence of chapels from the fifteenth century pointed to less fearful visions of mountains. However, it is likely they were an attempt at divine appeasement at a time when mountains were perceived as

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[6] Alighieri 1985; Bunyan 2003, 54, 115–117; Stowe 1854, 254.
[7] Grierson 1933, 212–217.
[8] Beattie 2006, 68–69, 74; Hyde 1937.

more malign than benevolent. Monk John de Bremble, for example, crossed the Alps in the twelfth century and after enduring freezing temperatures wrote 'Lord, restore me to my brethren that I may tell them that they come not to this place of torment'.[9] The seventeenth century diarist John Evelyn (1620-1706) crossed the Simplon Pass and recalled only the discomfort and dangers encountered – 'strange, horrid & fearful crags' inhabited by bears and wolves.[10] As late as 1711 the belief that dragons lurked in the mountains was given credence by the eminent scholar Johann Scheuchzer (1672-1733), Professor of Physics in Zurich and fellow of the Royal Society. He published a well-received account of the differing dragon types found in the Alps.[11] Where possible travellers avoided the mountains. If this was not feasible, they chose the quickest, shortest route with chapels and hospices providing psychological and material succour.

1.2.Developing the Sublime.

The view of the Alps as an area to avoid – a fearful place of strange, threatening creatures and phantoms – slowly changed towards the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. Mary Hope Nicolson's *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory* (1959) remains the authoritative account of this shift away from the perception of the Alps as dark, dangerous and depressing towards one of an aesthetically uplifting landscape where mountain grandeur, mystique and brilliance became a muse for artists, poets, philosophers and writers.[12]

Theologian Thomas Burnet's (1635-1715) *Sacred Theory of the Earth* (1681) played a significant role in stimulating this change of attitude.[13] Written after his experience of crossing the Alps, his book was an attempt at reconciling the surprising chaos, violence and lack of symmetry Burnet saw in the landscape with his theological belief in a well-ordered, divine, cosmology.[14] Burnet proposed the flood, caused by man's sin, had destroyed a perfect earth, which

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9 Coolidge 1889a, 9.
10 Dobson 1906, 1:335–6.
11 Fleming 2000, 9–10; Scheuchzer 1711.
12 Beattie 2006, 120–140, 187; Besson 2010, 95–108, 151–165, 304–316; Nicolson 1997; Schama 1995.
13 Burnet 1726.
14 Nicolson 1997, 195–199.

resulted in the creation of mountains. The book was widely read and apparently became as popular as Hobbes' *Leviathan (1651)* and Tom Paine's *Age of Reason (1794);* it was the most consulted work on geology in the seventeenth century, but also sparked controversy.[15] His theory seemed to question the perfection of God's design, because of which it is alleged he missed being appointed Archbishop of Canterbury.[16]

Burnet's book, nevertheless, represents a pivotal change in the perception of mountains. It contributed to a new awareness, to an increasingly pervasive belief in the emotional power of nature and landscape and to the value of experiencing mountains first-hand. The chaos and violence he saw in the Alps was direct evidence for Burnet of man's failure to fulfil divine expectations; because of this he found mountains disturbing. Simultaneously, however, he was obsessed by their grandeur, size and ambience. Burnet had previously believed beauty lay only in restraint, order and limitation.[17] His Alpine experience – as happened to several others later – brought about a change of view; it showed him there was also splendour in tumultuous torrents, steep rock faces, deep gorges and the sheer vastness of a landscape.[18]

> There is something august and stately in the air of these things, that inspires the mind with great thoughts and passions.[19]

He was confused by his emotions; the mountains showed 'a certain magnificence of Nature' that 'ravished,' even obsessed him, yet, he knew the feeling he experienced was not in response to 'beauty' as he had previously understood it. It was more a delightful sensation of overwhelming, almost terrifying awe for the vast and irregular summits.[20]

Burnet was one of the first to describe the paradoxical sensation of terrible wonderment and delightful fear he felt in the mountains. This created a foundation for the later development of the sublime, an idea that heavily

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[15] Gould 1980.
[16] Mendelbrote 2004; Nicolson 1997, 233.
[17] Burnet 1726, 170–171.
[18] Nicolson 1997, 216.
[19] Burnet 1726, 188.
[20] Burnet 1726, vol.1, 188–189; Nicolson 1997, 215–216.

influenced Romantic writers, artists, philosophers and innumerable travellers to the Alps in the nineteenth century.[21] Historian Simon Schama maintains that Horace Walpole and Thomas Gray's account of travelling through the Alps in 1739, on their grand tour, was the first Romantic account of mountain sublimity.[22] They found it hard to relay the reality of the wild torrents, chasms, enormous rocks and frightening precipices they had purposely sought on the way to the Grand Chartreuse monastery.[23] A few weeks later, the terror of the landscape became rather too real when Walpole's dog was caught and eaten by a wolf on the Mont Cenis pass.[24]

Almost twenty years later Edmund Burke, in 1757, famously developed his more theoretical reflection on the sublime. Astonishment, fear and obscurity, he claimed, were the three essential features of any sublime experience.[25] Delight came from people realizing, as Walpole and Gray appreciated, that despite danger they remained safe. The familiar or commonplace, unsurprisingly, was unable to generate the same powerful reaction as something new. At a time when art was largely figurative, this led Burke to claim that words were superior to pictures in this regard.[26] The almost abstract, emotional, depictions of artists such as Turner were still some years away, but as will be seen, were to add their own agency to the view of mountains and nature, arguably questioning Burke's assertion of the supremacy of rhetoric in the sublime.[27]

The notion of the sublime within art and literature is a substantial topic beyond the scope of this thesis. The extensive writing on its influence and role from around 1750 to 1850 reflects the sublime's cultural importance at that time.[28] Two books, however, are particularly relevant to this work; Cian Duffy's *Landscapes of the Sublime* (2013) highlights the importance that actually

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21 Nicolson 1997, 29 maintains Burnet rather than the 1674 translation of Longinus' Peri Hupsous played the greater part in developing interest in the sublime in the eighteenth century
22 Schama 1995, 449.
23 Walpole 1820, 1:32–33.
24 Walpole 1820, 1: 35.
25 Burke 1958, 57–60.
26 Burke 1958, 174–5; for an expansion of this idea see also Helsinger 1982, 50–53.
27 Schama 1995, 447–462.
28 Bolla 1989; Chard 2001; Clery 1996;Colley 2010; Duffy 2005;Duffy 2013; Duffy and Howell 2011; Myrone 2001; Nicolson 1997; O'Neill 2012; Schama 1995.

ascending mountains, rather than viewing or writing about them, had on a new discourse of the sublime around the beginning of the nineteenth century.[29] The higher people climbed, he maintains, the more they acquired a new perspective not only on landscape but, crucially, also on themselves and their lives; in other words there was a marriage between aesthetic and personal insight.[30] His work underlines how Chamonix became, as the Shelleys put it, 'classic ground' for experiencing the sublime; the fame of the area's sublimity made it an essential stop on any Alpine tour.[31]

Anne Colley's *Victorians in the Mountains, Sinking the Sublime* (2010) deals with a later period than Duffy. From the mid 1860s, noisy crowds brought by increased tourism to previously secluded, dramatic, beauty spots are held as one reason for the sublime's erosion. The frequency with which women appeared in the high and remote mountains was allegedly another. The sublime was connected with male power and dominance – something that women's physical encroachment of the Alps supposedly weakened.[32] Despite focussing on the demise of the sublime, Colley's work nevertheless bears testimony to the phenomenon's continued use, even if its influence decreased, in the second half of the nineteenth century.

A crucial figure who drew upon, and in turn affected, ideas of the sublime was Rousseau.[33]

> I must have torrents, rocks, pines, dead forest, mountains, rugged paths to climb or descend, and rugged roads with precipices on either side to alarm me.... a great part of my amusement in these steep rocks is they cause a giddiness.... which I am particularly fond of provided I am in safety.[34]

Although clearly enjoying such sublime experiences Rousseau also linked the benefits he perceived of such basic, high, rugged landscape with mankind's

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[29] Duffy 2013, 28–67.
[30] Duffy 2013, 40–41.
[31] Duffy 2013, 34.
[32] Colley 2010, 5.
[33] Duffy 2013, 31; Solnit 2001, 105–7; Gay 1984a has shown how Rousseau's works, particularly the Confessions (1782) were popular with a wide spectrum of Victorian Britain. There was an abiding interest, at the time, for autobiography that Rousseau with his frank admissions, admirably fulfilled.
[34] Rousseau 1953, 137.

development. Rousseau's best selling novel *La Nouvelle Heloise* (1761) championed the simple Alpine life. It stressed the benefits to body and soul experienced high in the mountains.[35]

> Upon the tops of mountains, the air being subtle and pure, we respire with greater freedom, our bodies are more active, our minds more serene… Our meditations acquire a degree of sublimity from the grandeur of the objects that surround us. It seems as if being lifted above all human society, we had left every low, terrestrial sentiment behind; and that as we approach the ethereal regions the soul imbibes something of their eternal purity.[36]

Connecting such an experience of sublime mountain landscape with a changed 'way of being' was felt, or at least described, by a number of people in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.[37] Certainly several women mountaineers came to echo Rousseau's words and sentiments later in the century, as will be shown in subsequent chapters.

Rousseau believed that mankind's natural state – which he associated with the untrammelled life of the Alpine peasant – had become corrupted as civilisation developed.

> nothing can be so gentle as [man] in his primitive state, when placed by nature at an equal distance from the stupidity of brutes, and the fatal enlightenment of civil man.[38]

This notion that primitive people had something to teach their modern descendants found resonance with those concerned with the effects of progressive industrialisation. Consequently, Rousseau became a major influence on romantic poets such as Wordsworth and Shelley, and later inspired the writer and mountaineer Leslie Stephen.[39]

1.3.The Picturesque.

The changing appreciation of mountains needs to be understood within the wider shifts that occurred in the perception and valorisation of landscape. The

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35 Rousseau 1997.
36 Rousseau 1997, 114.
37 Bridges 1814; Coxe 1816, iv; Williams 1798.
38 Rousseau 1761, 115.
39 Mitchell 1990; Schama 1995, 481; Solnit 2001, 108–109; Stephen 1904, 51.

parklands designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-1783), renowned for their bucolic, but manicured, vistas of rolling hills and lakes, calming on the eye, began slowly to fall from favour.[40] Some felt Brown's work destroyed the natural countryside it purported to display; it was viewed as too shaped, ordered and tame. Richard Payne Knight (1750-1824) landowner and scholar, for example, in 1794, criticised Brown's gardeners,

> T'Improve, adorn, and polish, they profess;
> But shave the goddess, whom they come to dress;
> Level each broken bank and shaggy mound,
> And fashion all to one unvaried round;[41]

Critics, like Knight, were proponents of the idea of the picturesque. This aesthetic view deliberately moved away from set classical scenes, previously favoured by many artists, to one that looked at the reality of natural landscape. As the name suggests, its aim was to give 'a peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture.'[42] One of the main advocates was William Gilpin (1724-1804), a New Forest cleric and artist. He wrote several essays on aspects of the picturesque, defining it and advising on how to study and paint different landscapes, including mountains, in a 'picturesque' mode.[43]

The hallmark of the picturesque, as distinct from 'beauty', was the way it captured irregularity and texture. The smoothness of grass 'tho right and as it should be in nature, offends in picture.' Insert some stones, cart tracks, break up the edges, 'make it rough; and you make it also picturesque.'[44] Consequently, rugged landscapes, mountains and collapsing ruins became favoured topics. This was a new way of seeing countryside, involving close observation and appreciation of landscape for itself, rather than as a stage for a classical scene. Arguably for the first time a link was made between virtue and painting landscape. Gilpin claimed that admitting and including roughness and the

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[40] Brown 2011; Stroud 1975.
[41] Quoted in Turner 1985, 164.
[42] Gilpin 1781, xii.
[43] Gilpin 1782; Gilpin 1781; Gilpin 1792.
[44] Gilpin 1792, 8.

irregularities of a surface pronounced a truth.[45] He believed such close observation enabled a greater emotional connection with the landscape. It demanded a more instinctive rather than considered response. Ruins, rugged mountainous scenes and wild areas became popular places to visit. Particular viewpoints in Lakeland, Wales and Scotland, consequently, became extremely common destinations to experience the picturesque.[46]

In some respects the picturesque and the sublime were sides of the same coin. Their advocates suggested they both brought people psychologically closer to the intricacies of landscape. The sublime, however, was wilder, less controllable and with a size and grandeur that was difficult to comprehend; by contrast, the picturesque, although also concerned with imposing views, was tamer and sought to contain and control nature, literally within the confines of the picture frame. Both these shifts in aesthetic sensibilities began to eclipse the classical education of the Grand Tour, with its knowledge of Greek and Roman antiquity, as a prerequisite for appreciation of landscape.[47] This development encouraged women, who generally did not receive the same classical teaching as men, to develop their own relationship and understanding of topographic scenery.

1.4.Interpreting the Landscape - Romantic Literature and Geology.

The desire to experience the sublime was a major influence on Romantic art and poetry that, in turn, significantly affected how many Victorian travellers, including mountaineers, reacted to landscape.[48] Quotations or references to Shelley, Wordsworth or Byron for example, pepper the letters and diaries of several women climbers.[49] William Wetmore Story, an American, maintained 'every Englishman abroad carries a Murray for information and a Byron for sentiment.'[50] Realising this, Murray eventually made the astute decision to include excerpts of poems *within* the guidebooks he began publishing from 1838; even altering them occasionally to fit, more precisely, to his guide.[51]

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46 Buzard 2002, 45; Orestano 2004.
47 Buzard 2002.
48 Duffy 2013, 65–67; Eaves 1993, 237.
49 Hornby 1907, 8; Spence Watson 1863. "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson."
50 Quoted in Buzard 2002, 50.
51 Buzard 1993, 125; for some examples see Murray 1843, 319, 321.

If Burnet had sown the seeds of the sublime landscape experience, then the Romantic poets made it their own. Unlike Burnet, however, the Romantics were not so obviously confused about their emotions in the face of grand landscape; for them beauty and the sublime fused together, they were not separate but a powerful confection.[52] Landscape was nature writ large and contained important lessons for mankind. Mountains, in particular, were often upheld as physical metaphors or backdrops for a range of senses; uniqueness, liberty, creativity, peace, and solitude. Such feelings stood in stark contrast to many aspects of contemporary society that Romanticism abhorred such as worldliness, greed, nature's destruction, uniformity, mechanisation and the urban cravings of the city.[53]

A number of poets of the Romantic period such as Byron (1788-1824), Shelley (1792-1822) and Wordsworth (1770-1850) were keen to project intuitive, passionate, responses to landscape rather than more reasoned and considered reactions typical of some enlightenment commentaries. For example, Byron's emotional

> Are not the mountains, waves and skies a part
> Of me and of my soul as I of them?
> Is not the love of these deep in my heart
> With a pure passion?[54]

was a long way from Donne's dry denigration of mountains as blots on the landscape 180 years earlier. Byron projects an intimate, embodied relationship with the environment that clearly comes from first-hand experience – one of being immersed in the mountains. As discussed in chapter 6 several climbers, for example Frances Havergal and Grace Hirst, wrote of that close phenomenological rapport with the mountains.[55] Whilst impossible to know the precise degree of influence Byron had over these particular individuals, given the use of his work in guide books and his acknowledged widespread popularity, it seems unlikely they were unaffected by his writing to some extent. Moreover, Stephen's

52 Nicolson 1997, 384.
53 See for example Byron's 'Manfred', 'The Pilgrimage of Childe Harold', Wordsworth's 'The Prelude', Shelley's 'Lines written in the Vale of Chamouni.'
54 Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, stanza lxxv.
55 Crane 1881, 70; Five Ladies 2003, 71.

rhetorical question, 'Where does Mont Blanc end and where do I begin…at least the connection is close and intimate' seems to echo Byron's feelings.[56] Havergal, Hirst and Stephen have a sense of uniting with the environment rather than merely passing through it.

Romantic poetry presented mountains as sources of fear, danger, horror and mystery alongside completely contrasting feelings of joy, exultation, wonder and majesty. Depicted as instinctive, natural responses to the landscape such sensations and emotions probably acted as powerful incentives for others to seek out similar experiences. Inducements to travel, as Story noted and Buzard expanded upon, to comparable sites at home and abroad in an effort to conjure up the same feelings the poets had extolled.[57]

Lest there should be any doubt, Kate Flint's study of women's reading has shown the extent to which Victorian middle-class women were familiar with popular and classical works of poetry, as well as philosophy, history and science. Mary Somerville's *Physical Geography* (*1848*), Tyndall's *Glaciers of the Alps* (1860*),* Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1830), Rousseau's *Confessions* (1782) and Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) are just some of the books read alongside works by writers such as Dante, Plutarch, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Ruskin.[58] Alpine pilgrimages often culminated in visits to Chamonix. The important point is that many of the women who gazed at Mont Blanc, inspected glaciers, collected rocks, read poems about the 'great mountain' and like Shelley tried to absorb 'the immensity of those aerial summits' did so from a culturally informed and well-read position.[59]

Travellers might also have been intrigued to visit the site of the crucial moment in the popular gothic novel *Frankenstein (1818)* when Victor was reacquainted with his monster. Dramatically situated on the Mer de Glace above Chamonix, the scenery is redolent of Frankenstein's creation. Symbolic of raw, wild, desolate nature, here creation appeared still in process, with glaciers sculpting the

[56] Stephen 1904, 296.
[57] For more confirmation of the influence of literature on European travel see also Pemble 1987, 71–77.
[58] Flint 1993, 85, 224–227.
[59] Shelley and Shelley 1817, 151–152.

mountains, the fall of avalanches and rocks constantly changing the landscape. What better place for the roughly hewn, newly made, monster to meet his maker – a man who stood in stark contrast to the scenery around him and to the 'fiend' he had created; a scientist dripping with the refinements of civilization. The two opposites met in the primeval crucible formed of mountains and glaciers. Mary Shelley evocatively set the scene.

> The abrupt sides of vast mountains were before me; the icy wall of the glacier overhung me; a few shattered pines were scattered around; and the solemn silence of this glorious presence-chamber of imperial nature was broken only by the brawling waves or the fall of some vast fragment, the thunder sound of the avalanche or the cracking…of the accumulated ice.[60]

Following publication of Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (1833), the fictional Alpine landscape of glaciers and rocks, so enticingly described by Shelley, became factual evidence of the almost fathomless age of the earth. Building on work by geologist James Hutton (1726-1797), Lyell showed the general reader how the very slow processes of sedimentation, pressure and weathering, over eons of time, created, eroded and reformed mountains. His book became very popular; by 1872 there were eleven editions. Mountain structure challenged the accepted age of the earth, which until the eighteenth century had remained around 6000 years. This was far too brief a timescale for mountains to be created in the way Lyell proposed. Although unrecognised at the time, Lyell's geological processes needed billions of years.[61]

Nevertheless Hutton and Lyell's insight taught people, in the nineteenth century, that by touching and handling rocks they were making real, physical contact with deep time.[62] The growing awareness that fossils were also equally ancient heightened this impact. During the Victorian period, geology and fossil collecting became a craze with Queen Victoria herself appointing a personal mineralogist.[63] Consequently, many visitors to the Alps went there specifically to collect

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[60] Shelley 1994, 119, 122–126.
[61] James Ussher, Bishop of Armagh, using the Julian calendar in 1650, calculated the earth began on October 26th 4004 b.c
[62] For more detail on history of geology see Macfarlane 2003, 22–65; O'Connor 2007.
[63] Macfarlane 2003, 48.

geological specimens. Ruskin later bemoaned the tapping of 'those dreadful [geological] hammers', which played a part in undermining his Christian faith.[64]

Romantic writers clearly used the Alps as a backdrop for a whole range of emotions – some pleasurable, others frightening and often a mixture of the two. Geology and palaeontology gave mountains a prominent position within science and natural history. Importantly, they all served to encourage increasing numbers of European and North American travellers to visit the mountains, both women and men.

1.5.Representing the Landscape - Ruskin and Art

The art critic John Ruskin (1819-1900) was an important influence on the way mountains were perceived in the second half of the nineteenth century; hence his relevance to this thesis. As a young man Ruskin was one of many Victorians heavily influenced by the Romantic poets and artists, particularly their ability to present familiar things, such as mountains and landscapes, in a new light.[65] Byron, he acknowledged, was his tutor in verse as Turner was in art.[66] For Ruskin, Turner's paintings captured both the mountains dynamism and their enigmatic, almost sacred, ethereal nature. Mountains, Ruskin felt, were 'the beginning and the end of all natural scenery.'[67] They were 'schools and cathedrals….treasures of illuminated manuscript for the scholar, kindly in simple lessons for the worker, quiet in pale cloisters for the thinker, glorious in holiness for the worshipper.'[68]

Turner's work captured the emotional quality of mountains, not merely their materiality. Paintings, such as the one in figure 2, attempted to depict the sublime mountain experience. Here an almost unseen summit, lurking behind thunderous threatening clouds, looms over the diminutive human figure taking shelter by a tree that has been shattered by avalanche or rock fall. Like Lyell, Ruskin recognised that the Alps were not static but a vibrant landscape

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[64] Cook and Wedderburn 1903, vol 36, 115.
[65] Ruskin 2005, 129–135; For a detailed study of Ruskin's relationship to the sublime and the influence of Romanticism see Helsinger 1982; see Morrison 2009 for the influence of the Romantics on Ruskin's relationship with mountains.
[66] Ruskin 2005, 129.
[67] Ruskin 1897, 4:365.
[68] Ruskin 1897, 4:371.

constantly changing and shifting - 'the silent wave of the blue mountain is lifted towards heaven'.[69] This in part explains the appeal to Ruskin of Turner's dynamic portrayals.



Figure 2. Mer de Glace, in the valley of Chamouni, J.M.W Turner. 1803. Watercolour. Yale Centre for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection. (Bridgeman Art Gallery)

It was defending Turner's work from critics that brought Ruskin initially to prominence with his first volume of *Modern Painters* in 1843; five more volumes followed one of which was '*Of Mountain Beauty*' (1856).[70] This edition contributed most to Ruskin's important role in the cultural construction of mountains during the Victorian period. Lyell explained mountain formation but Ruskin's prose dressed it with drama and emotion. He made clear the importance of mountains to mankind.

> And thus those desolate and threatening ranges of dark mountain which in nearly all ages of the world, men have looked upon with aversion or with terror,…are in reality sources of life and happiness far fuller and more beneficent than all the bright fullness of the plain.[71]

Unwittingly, given his subsequent writing about women's roles (considered later), this statement described what many women experienced in the

[69] Ruskin 1897, 4:104.
[70] Hilton 1985, 73.(First published 1856).
[71] Ruskin 1897, 4:104.

mountains; a 'source of life and happiness' in a space far removed from the stereotypically feminine, enclosed domestic arena.

Ruskin became a powerful voice in Victorian culture, both in terms of aesthetics and modes of production, and in what he saw as the demeaning nature of modern manufacture for most workers. Widespread lecturing throughout Britain, both to the middle classes and to working men's organisations, augmented the impact of his numerous books on architecture, art, education and political economy.[72] He lectured at Cambridge University but also in places like Bradford Townhall, the Working Men's Institute, Camberwell, and towns as varied as Tonbridge and Manchester; by most accounts these events were well attended by both men and women.[73]

Ruskin's reverential view of mountains, with his status as a public figure, author and art critic, encouraged many Victorians to see the hills anew. His belief that mountains were best seen from afar rather than close up encouraged a sense that the mountain experience was available to all, not just to climbers.[74] It suggested the Alps could be appreciated by the old or infirm sitting some distance away in the valley, as well as the young and strong out on the hill and of course, also by women. These were, clearly, two different types of experience. One came from physical immersion within the mountains whilst the other was a purely visual appreciation. There was some disagreement as to which was the more genuine – an issue that will be discussed in the following chapter. The important point here is that Ruskin attracted attention to the Alps as an aesthetic and artistic venue, which was open to all and had the potential to change and challenge. This consolidated the position of the Alps within Victorian culture that had already been endorsed by Romantic poets and writers.

1.6.Appropriating 'Mountain Space'

According to historian John Barrell, in the eighteenth century, the 'correct' taste in landscape painting was a way of displaying ownership of political authority

[72] Helsinger 1982; Hilton 1985; Hilton 2000; Ruskin 2005.
[73] Cook and Wedderburn 16,1903: 9–174, 177–206, 251–426, 427–487; Hunt 2004, 166.
[74] Cook and Wedderburn 18, 1903: 25. 37, 1903:142.

and became symbolic of those in control of society.[75] The superior status and ability of the male landed elite purportedly gave them the capacity to have a more holistic overview of civilisation, which uniquely enabled them to discern what was best for all in society. From their metaphorical mountaintop view they looked down over those they governed – women and the lower classes – who were commonly portrayed in the valley. This alignment of political authority with the summit space concurs with Hansen's study of the role Mont Blanc played when people began claiming their own individual rights.[76]

Although this politically hierarchical interpretation of landscape declined with the rise of the sublime and the picturesque, climbing to mountain summits with their associated panoramic views continued to provide metaphors for superiority, insight and revelation into the nineteenth century and beyond. The critic and writer Alice Meynell in 1899 wrote,

> To mount a hill is to lift with you something lighter and brighter than yourself…you lift the world, you raise the horizon.[77]

At a similar time, the Scottish evangelist Henry Drummond's *Ascent of Man* (1894) gave mountains pride of place. His essays were a fervent celebration of mankind's position at the pinnacle of evolutionary progress; a triumph, he felt, of both science and 'moral nature.'[78]

This leads to a consideration of how different spaces and places developed varying associations and significances, both in the imagination and in reality. Scholars Michel de Certeau and Doreen Massey are amongst those who have been particularly influential in this regard.[79] Both maintain it is the interaction of people that transforms a specific place into a functioning, purposeful space. De Certeau, for example, famously wrote of how the movements of pedestrians, the myriad paths they take, their interpersonal collaborations or rejections, unwittingly creates and gives purpose to 'the city'. Without people the city, as a meaningful space, is non-existent; it has no purpose.

[75] Barrell 1990.
[76] Hansen 2013a.
[77] Quoted in Fraser 2014, 6.
[78] Drummond 1894, 326–327.
[79] Certeau 1988; Massey 1994.

People's interaction, however, as well as being a potential creative force, has been recognised as a possible cause of conflict, or contest, over the use of space and who should occupy it. The power inherent in certain social relations often constructs rules that define boundaries and activities appropriate to many spaces.[80] Differences in class, gender, race and religion are the main reasons employed to delimit space and exclude 'inappropriate others'.

Many spaces and places are, consciously or unconsciously, associated with specific genders. For example, most people will automatically connect the kitchen, workshop, nursery or the pub, with particular genders. Similarly, remote wild, open places such as the arctic, deserts and mountain summits tend to evoke images of men rather than women. By contrast gentle rolling country, gardens and parks bear a more typically female imprint; they are safer more enclosed landscapes. Such connections undoubtedly change with different cultures and time periods but some degree of gendered connotation remains.[81]

Mountains, in the nineteenth century, and to some extent even today, occupy a conflicting position with regard to gender. Associated with mystery, myths and the spirituality of nature, mountains are often seen symbolically as female or as the home of deities; the most famous example is probably Chomolungma, (Everest) meaning Holy Mother. In Christian countries Madonnas typically adorn the summits. Mountains can be sacred but also, like women, targets for conquest and domination.[82] Mountaineer, Edward Whymper, as will be discussed in chapter two, clearly viewed mountains as female and ripe for invasion. Mountains, therefore, often evoked a feeling of purity, contemplation and adoration – making them in one sense a female space. Partly because of that connotation, however, they were also areas to be captured and subjugated, and so developed a reputation as belonging to men.

In Victorian Britain men's dominant position, embedded within the ideology of separate spheres, is a prime example of how social power relations are able to delimit or claim a particular space. Viewed as opponents and barriers, mountains

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[80] Massey 1994, 2,177–183; McDowell 1999, 4.
[81] Massey 1994, 2–5, 186; McDowell 1999, 9–11.
[82] Besson 2010; Mathieu 2011.

appeared to offer an ideal opportunity to showcase masculinity's perceived idealised attributes of mental and physical strength.[83] The image of a strong, self–reliant, competitive mountaineer, who ultimately occupied and laid claim to the summit space correlated with an idealised vision of middle-class masculinity. The latter is discussed in detail in the following chapter; the important point here is how mountains provided the perfect cultural metaphor for men's hierarchical position in the nineteenth century. The space itself reinforced not only masculinity but also the inherent power of the male's social position; it served notice to 'others' that, at least in society's imagination, mountains were for men not women. However, as will be discussed, relatively few middle-class men *actually* became mountaineers; the vision was as much an aspiration as a reality. Nevertheless, as will be seen, it presented a difficulty that female climbers had to navigate.

2.The History of Mountaineering

2.1.A Definition?

We might assume the term mountaineer is so obvious as not to need defining. The dictionary describes it simply as someone 'engaged in mountain climbing'; interestingly there is no imperative to reach the summit.[84] This raises the question of when does walking become climbing; is scrambling an interesting walk or an easy climb? Is there a definite point at which the two diverge? In trying to trace the beginnings of mountaineering surely it is essential to know what *exactly* is being considered – to have a watertight definition? This is problematic for a variety of reasons.

First, it gives no space for change over time. There is a risk of anachronism, of laying onto the past present conceptions about the meanings of exploring mountains and ignoring concerns that were real then, but of limited significance now. For example, many people in the second half of the nineteenth century travelled from Chamonix to Zermatt (or vice versa) crossing several high passes en route.[85] This involved occasional scrambling and negotiating a number of glaciers. People who did this were viewed as mountaineers, whereas, today it is

[83] Neuhaus 2012, 76– 81.
[84] "Mountaineer, v." 2014.
[85] Hornby 1907; Pigeon 1885.

seen more as a challenging walk. In the nineteenth century there were different issues to those encountered today – heavy equipment, no torches or electricity, variable water supplies, cumbersome clothes difficult to dry, no crampons or technical mountaineering equipment and crucially no easy form of communication or emergency transport. Additionally all provisions often had to be carried where now there are serviced huts. These are some of the issues that made, what today seems a tough walk, into a serious expedition.

Second, due to the wide individual variation in people's ability and fitness, the arduousness of climbing is bound to be, in part, subjective. After all, the sense of difficulty alters not only according to natural aptitude and technical training, but also in relation to psychological state, age and gender. With regard to the latter, this is not to imply women were necessarily less capable than men of climbing the most difficult ascents, as will be shown, but that prevailing gendered perceptions could initially structure experience and expectations of the Alps. Moreover, diverse body types whether they are male or female, tall or short, fat or lean, physically and mentally weak or strong react to walking and climbing differently. What to one person, therefore, is a difficult rock climb to another might be an easy scramble or even a stiff walk. Two climbers share in the exploration of the mountains and are therefore cast as 'mountaineers' but their subjective experience, the pace they set, the manner in which they climb and how they register what it is they are doing, may be radically different.

Finally, it is clearly impossible to climb mountains without first walking; one is born of the other. Interaction of the terrain with an individual's ability determines whether the activity is understood as walking or climbing. The gradual change in landscape demands a corresponding shift in activity level. When this occurs varies from person to person but eventually the whole body becomes involved, arms and legs working together to negotiate the terrain. In reality, walking and climbing cannot be separated; they are either end of a continuum rather than two different, distinct entities and both can be considered, in certain circumstances, forms of mountaineering.

At first glance walking may seem such a natural and instinctive activity as not to have a 'history', nor to require historical examination, but where and how it was done and the meanings associated with it have evidently fluctuated.[86] The fashion for the picturesque meant walking in the country, particularly in wilder landscapes, became a popular activity particularly for the middle class.[87] Previously, whereas the aristocracy often had private estates to meander in, the urban middle classes were confined to walking on commons, in squares and where available pleasure gardens.[88] There were few public parks until the nineteenth century, which were built mainly in response to growing urbanisation.[89] Walking on the road or across country was largely viewed as something purely functional, a utilitarian activity; a mode of transport adopted primarily by the lower classes, for necessity rather than pleasure. Moreover, it had associations with footpads and danger of molestation, particularly for women as noted by Sarah Hazlitt in her 1822 journal.[90] The picturesque changed that; exploring and commenting on rugged natural scenery became fashionable. It was much discussed, for example, in *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) and again in *Northanger Abbey* (1818).[91] Familiarity with the picturesque became a talking point, but could only be discussed if the viewer had actually been outside and walked; it demanded interaction with the landscape. Rousseau famously contributed to this imperative to walk, insisting it provided a mechanism for self-discovery as well as revealing the beauties of nature. 'Never,' he claimed, 'did I think so much, exist so vividly and experience so much, never have I been so much myself than in the journeys I have undertaken alone and on foot.'[92]

Let us return here to Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. As enthusiasts for mountain landscape they walked copiously in all seasons and weathers, in the Lakes, Scotland and the Alps as well as southern Britain.[93] They also wrote about

[86] For a thoughtful and engaging history of walking see Solnit 2001; Certeau 1988 describes how pedestrians create and usurp spaces in cityscapes. It is they, not any "authority" that creates the city; McDowell 1999, 148–169 considers how outside spaces are used by different genders.
[87] Jarvis 1997, 53; Solnit 2001, 95.
[88] Conway 1991, 21–25, 32.
[89] Conway 1991, 228–234.
[90] Quoted in Jarvis 1997, 157.
[91] Austen 2013a, 30, 60, 96.
[92] Rousseau 1953, 158. First published 1782.
[93] Wordsworth and Wordsworth 1935, 273–80.

it, thereby encouraging others to follow suit. Importantly, they made it abundantly clear walking was not necessarily an activity confined to men.[94] In this sense, it could be argued they have a part to play in the development of mountaineering as much as the first people to climb Mont Blanc. Moreover, the first usage of the word 'mountaineer' by Wordsworth's frequent walking companion Coleridge was when he inadvertently descended Broad Stand – a rocky cliff in the Lake District.[95]

2.2.Early Mountaineers

Of course, the activity of mountaineering did not wait for a word to be coined. Consequently, when asking who was the first true mountaineer and when and how this came about we need to look much earlier. Traditionally historians give this accolade to the renaissance Italian poet Petrarch (1304-1374).[96] He climbed Mont Ventoux in 1336 and crucially, for historians, wrote about his experience. This not only recorded it for posterity but also made his mountaineering into a self-conscious, textually demonstrable act.[97] Shepherds had climbed the mountain before but for work not any aesthetic or recreational purpose. Petrarch supposedly was the first to climb for leisure – for the experience rather than necessity, an activity that earned him the epithet the first 'modern man' from historian Carl Jacob Burckhardt in 1868.[98] However, although Petrarch wrote of his ascent, unsurprisingly, he was not the first to climb mountains. Historian Lynn Thorndike, for example, records the case of a Parisian teacher who wrote of climbing Mont Ventoux and visiting the Cevennes several times between 1313 and 1334. She also discusses other, even earlier, instances of people making various ascents – some as early as the tenth and eleventh centuries.[99] Over the following 200 years there were sporadic accounts of knights and envoys sent off to climb various mountains, claiming them for God or King in the process.[100] The importance attached to Petrarch's climb, rather than

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94 Wordsworth 1997. First published 1874.
95 Coleridge 1956, 450–452.
96 Hansen 2013a has a detailed discussion of Petrarch as the first "modern man". He discusses at length the importance associated with being first. See also Fleming 2000; Gribble 1899.
97 Thompson 1971.
98 Burckhardt 1890, 301–302.
99 Thorndike 1943, 71–72.
100 Fleming 2000, 5; Gribble 1899, 5–13.

the exploits of other early climbers, demonstrates the way evidence that is easier to access, or is associated with people of prestige, can create false impressions and lead to different, possibly false, conclusions. This is something that resonates with the perception of women mountaineers, as will be discussed in chapter 6.

Unlike the Swiss naturalist Conrad Gessner (1516-1565) Petrarch, as far as we know, never climbed another mountain after Mont Ventoux. Gessner, however, vowed to climb one every year of his life for the benefit of exercise as much as the scenery.[101] He was, perhaps, the first to publically claim that climbing mountains benefited both body and soul, and as such he seems closer to the sensibility of 'modern man' than Petrarch. [102]

These climbing accounts of men – and until the late eighteenth century they were all *men,* no women – described the occasional individual who had a particular interest or job to do. They do not represent a rise in a commonly held or popularly followed interest. Moreover, the mountains they climbed were relatively minor summits compared to the main peaks of the Alps. For most people the high mountains in Europe remained forbidding places.

2.3.Becoming a Mountaineer

During the eighteenth century this began to change. In 1741 two eccentric Englishmen, Norfolk landowner William Windham (1717-1761) and traveller Richard Pococke (1704-1765), acting against all local advice mounted an expedition onto the large glacier that courses down from the Mont Blanc massif to Chamonix.[103] They were astounded at what they saw. Windham wrote of the glacier,

> I am extremely at a loss how to give a right idea of it as I know no one thing which I have ever seen that has the least resemblance to it.[104]

They named the glacier Mer de Glace; a label that remains. Although not the first to visit Chamonix, Windham and Pococke's social connections and the pamphlet they published raised awareness of the remote valley with the mysterious ice

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[101] Conrad Gessner 1937. First published 1543.
[102] For a comprehensive study of the development of the "modern" see Hansen 2013a.
[103] De Beer 1930, 98–114.
[104] Windham and Martel 1744.

rivers and rocky pinnacles it contained.[105] They presented their findings to the Royal Society and subsequently became members.[106] Several guidebooks claimed the Chamonix valley was unknown until these 'two English gentlemen…discovered it.'[107] Windham and Pococke's venture, it appears, stimulated almost unprecedented interested in the valley of Chamonix and life in the Alps generally. This was aided by the writing of Swiss anatomist and naturalist Albrecht von Haller (1708-1777). His poem *Die Alpen* (1732) alongside Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Heloise (1761)* popularised the moral purity of the Alps.[108]

Horace-Bénédict de Saussure (1740-1799), a Genevan aristocrat and amateur scientist, who initially collected plants for Haller, became obsessed from his youth with the mountains and Mont Blanc in particular.[109] In his first volume of *Voyage dans Les Alpes (1786)* he recorded his initial impressions of Chamonix in 1760,

> These majestic glaciers, separated by great forests, and crowned by granite crags of astounding height cut in the form of great obelisks and mixed with snow and ice, present one of the noblest and most singular spectacles it is possible to imagine.[110]

After this first excursion he posted notices throughout the neighbourhood of a reward he would give to anyone who first climbed Mont Blanc.[111] There were many attempts at the ascent before it was eventually climbed sixteen years later.

Many historians and climbers have extensively analysed the first ascent of Mont Blanc in 1786 by Chamonix's doctor Michel-Gabriel Paccard (1757-1827) and local hunter Jaques Balmat (1762-1834) that it needs no detailed recapitulation here.[112] Hansen has unravelled the complex role politics played in the various attempts on the summit and the symbolic importance of Mont Blanc in the power

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[105] Mathews 1898, 10.
[106] Rowlinson 1998.
[107] Quoted in Mathews 1898, 10; Ebel 1818, 376.
[108] Schama 1995, 479, 481.
[109] Hansen 2013a; Mathews 1898, 19–24.
[110] Saussure 1786, Vol 1, 429.
[111] Saussure 1786, Vol II, 550
[112] De Beer 1930, 169–181; Engel 1950, 44–71; Fleming 2000; Gribble 1899, 145–181;Hansen 2013a; Lunn 1914, 60–81; Mathews 1898; Unsworth 1986.

play between different factions. Saussure, Paccard, Balmat and their various supporters, willingly or not, were all embroiled, to some degree, in political manoeuvring as well as personal animosity. Accusations and debates about the exact nature of the 1786 ascent and which of the two men was actually first to the top continued even into the twentieth century.[113]

For the purpose of this thesis five points are particularly important. First, the ascent of Mont Blanc was the earliest instance of alpinism, more or less, as it is understood today - a planned expedition to a major summit solely for the purpose of getting to the top. Second, because of the wealth and international connections of Saussure it attracted wide public attention, particularly when Saussure himself made the ascent the following year.[114] The greater publicity given to the more socially influential Saussure, rather than to Balmat or Paccard, compares to the marginalisation of some women climbers almost a hundred years later. Like these two men, women often received less recognition than male counterparts for the same or similar feats. For example, in 1854, Alfred Wills' climb of the Wetterhorn (3692m), was widely publicised and credited with starting a 'Golden Age' of alpinism. By contrast, in the same year, Mrs Hamilton's achievement of becoming the first British woman and the third ever to stand on Mont Blanc (4810m) attracted comparatively little attention.

The first ascent of Mont Blanc was also important in cementing the connection between science and mountaineering. Within days of Saussure finishing the ascent, astronomer and physicist, Mark Beaufoy (1764-1827), became the first Englishman and the sixth person to stand on Mont Blanc's summit. He presented a paper about the expedition to the Royal Society on his return; both Saussure and Beaufoy subsequently were elected members.[115] Early alpinism attracted people, like Saussure and Beaufoy, interested in science and natural history.[116] It was a perfect opportunity to combine adventure with both geographic and scientific exploration; indeed it initially gave mountaineering a seemingly more

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113 Hansen 2013a.
114 Engel 1950, 54.
115 Mathews 1898, 108–113, 321.
116 The Deluc brothers are other examples of scientists who climbed see Engel 1950, 28.

worthy purpose than mere personal enjoyment.[117] To a limited extent the link between science and mountaineering remains. Recent expeditions, for example, have shed light on climate change, treatment of respiratory disease and diabetes.[118] Although these latest expeditions were unrelated to the Alpine Club, the subtitle of its journal remains *A Record of Mountain Adventure and Scientific Observation*.

The conquest of Mont Blanc also made ordinary people realise that mountains, hitherto thought impossible, could now at least be attempted; it opened the possibility of climbing to a wider populace. Joseph Michaud, for example, with no interest in science, tried the ascent shortly after Beaufoy simply because the mountain was now acknowledged as climbable. He had little preparation, took two guides as opposed to Beaufoy's party of twelve, became exhausted half way up, and went down. He was one of the first modern mountaineers – keen to climb for his own personal experience not any external recognition.[119]

Finally, the first ascent also coincided with the general enfranchisement of the people of Chamonix. This freedom from feudal obligations to the monastery in neighbouring Sallanches improved the economy of the town.[120] Crucially for the development of mountaineering, it gave some men more time to become guides and it did so just as demand was growing. Mont Blanc's conquest, and the subsequent reporting, drew increasing numbers of people to the valley to try their hand at climbing and exploring the massif – for this they needed guides.

Importantly, some of the people drawn to Chamonix were women; in the same year Mont Blanc was conquered Jane and Mary Parminter, two sisters from Devon, climbed Mont Buet, the 3096-metre summit opposite Mont Blanc. Whilst clearly not as difficult, the climb nevertheless was a remarkable achievement and sufficiently unusual to be covered by two local newspapers.[121]

2.4. After the French Revolution

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117 For the complex relationship of science to exploration and the "arena" provided by the RGS see Driver 2001, 11–20, 25–37.
118 "Professor Mike Grocott :: Xtreme Everest 2" 2014; Kaser 2004.
119 Engel 1950, 64.
120 Hansen 2013a, 63–68.
121 National Trust 2011, 6–8.

The French Revolution brought invasion to Switzerland and the states of Savoy in 1792, which almost halted climbing before it had truly begun. The next recorded ascent of Mont Blanc was not until 1802.[122] Elsewhere in the Alps it was a further ten years before major ascents were undertaken; the Jungfrau in 1811, the Zumsteinspitze in 1820, the Breithorn in 1813 and an attempt on the Finsteraarhorn in 1812.[123]

The first major ascent by a woman occurred in 1808. Balmat allegedly persuaded Marie Paradis, a local Chamonix servant, that becoming the first woman to climb Mont Blanc would earn her a profitable notoriety. She later told Henriette d'Angeville (1794 -1871) – the second woman to climb Mont Blanc – that this was indeed her prime motivation rather than any innate desire to climb. In subsequent years, visitors to Chamonix did augment her otherwise meagre income.[124] She appears, however, anything but a shy, easily led woman. English climber Markham Sherwill in 1826 described her as high-spirited and determined to accompany friends on the climb. Several guides told him they were 'jealous of the honour of their …countrywoman and dwelt with much animation on her courage and perseverance'.[125] After d'Angeville's climb in 1838, Marie Paradis' outgoing personality became obvious as she rowdily toasted all the members of the ascent party in turn at a celebratory dinner.[126] Her conversations with d'Angeville also portray a forceful, confident, nature, which differs from Balmat's picture that emphasises, even exaggerates, her reluctance, dependence and weakness.[127]

Paradis admitted the climb was exhausting and the guides helped her. D'Angeville also found it tiring as many climbers, men and women, have subsequently experienced, including the author. In the nineteenth century the climb began from the valley floor and was much longer than it is today, (now climbers start almost 2000 metres higher). It should come as no surprise that Paradis found it exhausting.

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122 Mathews 1898, 321.
123 Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 23, 50, 103, 120.
124 D'Angeville 1992, 104–105. First published 1838; Mathews 1898, 67.
125 Clark, Sherwill, and Jackson 1826, 292–293.
126 D'Angeville 1992, 108.
127 Hansen 2013a, 140.

Historians have frequently commented on the altitude sickness suffered by Paradis and d'Angeville whilst neglecting to mention that many men experienced the same or worse.[128] Many of d'Angeville's guides and porters, for example, apparently suffered more than she did. While she spent an hour on the summit writing and sketching, 'my guides implored me to spare them a longer sojourn at an altitude where several of them were experiencing such torment while I felt so well.'[129] Such selective reporting demonstrates the way a distorted and gendered view can easily become the accepted historical account. Balmat's slightly embellished version undermined Paradis' achievement whilst ensuring a pivotal position for men like him. After all, some might say, if a simple, untrained, woman could stand on Mont Blanc unaided where was the skill?

Close reading of D'Angeville's climb is interesting not just for her status as the first true female mountaineer, but also for revealing how popular versions of her climb have often provided an unbalanced picture. For example, she is often depicted as a slightly ludicrous, eccentric figure keen to attract attention. 'That thwarted maiden lady in her forties' is a common expression. Her supposedly 'unfulfilled' life, her dress, age and the size of her expedition are frequently ridiculed.[130] However, in her party of six guides four men were older than she was; the two all-male expeditions that climbed Mont Blanc on the same day as D'Angeville had only one or two fewer guides than she did. Henry Atkins, an Englishman who climbed Mont Blanc the previous year, took ten guides, six porters and some additional 'volunteers', yet this extraordinarily large party has not attracted the censure levelled at D'Angeville's smaller expedition.[131]

Her clothing has also been criticised, amongst other things, as attention seeking.[132] It was not, however, particularly outlandish. Figure 3 shows the outfit was extremely practical, despite the nod to femininity where footwear was concerned.[133] Flannel shirts next to the skin, double layers of socks, silk

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[128] Atkins 1838, 28; Gribble 1899, 246; Hansen 2013a, 171; Mathews 1898, 158–9.
[129] D'Angeville 1992, 78.
[130] Clark 1953, 174; Engel 1950; Fleming 2000, 107; Williams 1973, 21.
[131] Atkins 1838, 13.
[132] Clark 1953, 175.
[133] She wore nailed waterproofed boots for the climb. The delicate shoes pictured were possibly to portray a more feminine public image.

stockings, Scottish plaids, trousers with gaiters, veils and two pairs of gloves all afforded necessary protection from the sun, wind and cold.[134] Furthermore, D'Angeville wore substantially less at times than Atkins who wore two or three of everything.[135]

Not only was she independent and determined but D'Angeville also indulged in some amateur science – something that was supposedly a male preserve. Throughout her climb she measured the air temperature, being careful to make allowances for sun and shade. She took her pulse at different altitudes and after periods of rest and activity.[136] By taking such measurements she presumably saw herself, like Beaufoy and Saussure, able to contribute to scientific knowledge; something, at the time, deemed essential to the credibility of any erstwhile explorer.[137] Unlike them, however, no membership of a learned society resulted. Her transgression into such typically male territory and interests was probably one reason for the ridicule and less than flattering depictions that emerged.

Unlike most of her male contemporaries, she was unafraid to show a profound self-awareness. She admitted exhaustion but also knew her implacable determination and willpower. She understood her strengths and vulnerabilities – not least the effect of friends trying to dissuade her; she forbade entry to anyone in the weeks immediately before her departure from Geneva lest she should waver.[138]

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134 D'Angeville 1992, 31.
135 Atkins 1838, 25.
136 D'Angeville 1992, 38, 41, 68–71.
137 Kearns 1997, 462; Driver 2001, 55.
138 D'Angeville 1992, xxii.



Figure 3. Henriette d'Angeville. Miniature by Henriette Rath 1830. [139]

Certainly D'Angeville was an exceptional woman and was recognised as such by fellow 'equality' campaigner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, who made a point of meeting her in 1853 while on a European tour. [140] D'Angeville climbed Mont Blanc very much with women in mind, fully aware that no woman had instigated their own ascent before; indeed, one of her friends urged her subsequent writing 'to bear the feminine stamp.'[141] Her Mont Blanc climb was not merely to make a statement on behalf of women, however, mountains held a real allure for. She had climbed previously and continued for another 25 years, making her last ascent aged 69.[142]

In 1838, a month before D'Angeville's climb, another woman also achieved a notable first ascent. Anne Lister (1791-1840), a wealthy Yorkshire landowner who openly led a lesbian lifestyle, was the first amateur to climb Vignemale (3298m) in the Pyrenees.[143] Like D'Angeville Lister was powerfully independent, someone used to organising, ordering and achieving; something she clearly

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[139] D'Angeville 1992, 38.
[140] Stowe 1854, 237.
[141] D'Angeville 1992, xxiv.
[142] D'Angeville 1992, xv.
[143] Liddington 1993.

displayed when the Prince of Moscowa alleged he, rather than Lister, had made Vignemale's first ascent. Lister rapidly engaged lawyers to successfully defend her position.[144]

2.5.Growing Popularity of the Alps.

The formation of Chamonix's Compagnie des Guides in 1823 reflected the growing popularity of climbing. Wordsworth who had walked to the Alps in 1790, despite the French revolution, returned with his wife, sister and two friends in 1820 with an 'ambition to cross the Alps on foot.'[145] Histories of mountaineering frequently pass over the first fifty years of the nineteenth century to concentrate on the period known as the 'Golden Age' (1854-1865) when many of the highest peaks were climbed. This phenomenon, however, was built on interest that had grown over previous decades – on the activities of people like the Worsdworths who walked and explored the mountains.

Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, more people, men and women, were travelling again throughout Europe and, of these, increasing numbers were going to the mountains, particularly the Alps.[146] In 1822 for example, Mrs and Miss Campbell, a mother and daughter, crossed the Col de Geant (3371m) a demanding glaciated pass from Chamonix to Courmayeur.[147] Publisher John Murray, in 1829, honeymooned in Chamonix where he and his wife explored the upper reaches of the Mer de Glace.[148] Henriette d'Angeville's 1838 Mont Blanc climb came after ten years of walking and exploring in the mountains and in 1843 the physicist and geologist James Forbes (1809-1868) published *Travels Through the Alps of Savoy* – a result of several annual tours. One lady in her 1844 journal of a European tour declared, 'As we entered Chamonix we heard there were no beds or guides to be had, it was so full'. Their hotel was so crowded the 160 guests had to eat in shifts.[149]

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144 Williams 1973, 28–31.
145 De Selincourt 1941, Vol 2, 7.
146 De Selincourt 1941, Vol 2, 284.
147 Coolidge 1908, 211.
148 Murray 1829, 13.
149 Heafford 2008, 72–73.

Ascents of the highest mountains, however, remained sporadic. Interest was largely centred on accessible viewpoints and walks amongst and up to glaciers and cols. Eliza Cole's A *Ladies Tour around Monte Rosa* in 1850 gives a taste of these popular mountain excursions that avoided the highest summits.[150] Even Mont Blanc for example, the mountain that initially attracted most attention, was climbed only thirty times between 1800 and 1850.[151] Murray's 1843 guidebook berates those who attempted it for 'curiosity alone' – they were unnecessarily endangering guides and porters.[152] By 1856, however, change was afoot; he noted that the ascent was now made 'frequently' and by 1858 twenty to thirty people were climbing it annually, most of them English. Any derogatory comments about amateur climbers were removed.[153]

2.6.Albert Smith.

Why the sudden change? As many historians have noted Albert Smith, an English showman who first visited Chamonix in 1838 just as Henriette D'Angeville finished her climb, played a significant role in this growing popularity.[154] After climbing Mont Blanc himself in 1851, with the size and style of party that makes D'Angeville's group look restrained, the following year he mounted a show about the climb at the Egyptian Halls, Piccadilly. A spectacle in every sense, it included St Bernard dogs, running water, live fish, alpine flowers, reconstructions of Mont Blanc, knapsacks, chamois skins and alpenhorns. He even gave the audience the sensation of viewing Mont Blanc from a Swiss chalet by changing the auditorium balconies.

Smith knew how to tell a good story.[155] He had previously run a similar show about travelling to Egypt, had written amusingly satirical articles for several periodicals and published what became one of the nineteenth century's best selling books, *The Natural History of the Gent* (1847).[156] His Mont Blanc diorama, however, complete with music and special effects was of a different order.

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[150] Cole 1859.
[151] Mathews 1898, 321–322.
[152] Murray 1843, 325–6.
[153] Murray 1861, 363.
[154] For a detailed account of Albert Smith and The Ascent of Mont Blanc show see McNee 2009; For other commentaries see Bevin 2010; Hansen 1995; Fleming 2000, 145–161.
[155] "The Ascent of Mont Blanc." *Illustrated London News,* December 25,1852.
[156] Hansen 1991, 90.

Hugely successful, in the first two years it grossed in excess of £17,000.[157] Despite his brazen showmanship, extrovert personality and being labelled 'a cockney' by Ruskin, Smith found royal favour.[158] He gave a command performance to the royal Princes three months after the show opened, staged another at Osborne House for the queen and yet another at Windsor Castle.[159] In 1857 Smith escorted the Prince of Wales to Chamonix.[160] The show spawned board games, books, ladies fans and colouring books that all contributed to what *The Times* subsequently labelled 'Mont Blanc mania'.[161]

Ruskin may have accused Smith of vulgarity and bemoaned the demeaning of his alpine cathedrals, but Smith had revealed the Alps in a new and meaningful way to people who had not, hitherto, been seduced by Romantic poetry or art's portrayal of mountains. McNee claims part of Smith's success, coming not long after the Great Exhibition, was the way the show merged exhibition culture with showmanship; it was simultaneously entertaining and informative.[162] Hansen feels the show gave the middle class a new cultural self-image; one that undermined the aesthetics of the sublime and picturesque, replacing it with a new status symbol of mountaineering.[163] While this seems an odd claim given that Smith poked fun at 'snobbishness', class foibles and travellers misquoting Byron, it is inescapable that ascents of Mont Blanc rose dramatically following the start of his extravaganza. From 1854 to 1859 there were 88 ascents – previously there had been only 45 since Balmat's first 1786 climb.[164]

The show gave people the chance to vicariously climb Mont Blanc from the safety of their theatre seat but, importantly, prompted some to make it a reality. 'Probably no event in England,' wrote one mountaineer, 'has awakened so keen an interest in the Alps, as the entertainment which the late Albert Smith gave in

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157 "Mr Albert Smith." *Illustrated London News,* December 10,1853.
158 Ruskin witnessed Smith's Mont Blanc climb & wrote to his father there had been "a cockney ascent" Cook and Wedderburn 1903, 117.
159 "Court Circular." *The Times,* June 29, 1852 & March 27, 1856.
160 Blakeney 1946, 279.
161 "Mont Blanc Has Become a Positive Nuisance." *The Times,* October 6, 1856.
162 McNee 2009, 35–39.
163 Hansen 1995, 308–9; see Colley 2010, 78–95 for discussion of how 'spectacle' could erode the sublime experience.
164 Hansen 1991, 80.

the Egyptian Hall.'[165] It cast an impression on several who eventually became experienced mountaineers.[166] Edward Whymper, for example, who made the first ascent of the Matterhorn was 'satisified and more,' with the spectacle. However, mountain explorer Douglas Freshfield (1845-1934), who saw the show aged nine, later wrote, 'I recollect particularly an absurd picture of the Mur de la Cote. I was very much disappointed ten years later by the reality!' [167]

While it seems almost irrefutable that Albert Smith played a significant part in stimulating the surge in mountaineering that occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century, I would argue he was 'pushing at an open door'. As already discussed, Chamonix was packed with visitors during the summer season for ten years or more before Smith put on his show. Smith himself was one of these. Being a shrewd observer of people with an eye for profit, it seems likely he saw an opportunity to exploit the existing, overwhelming appeal of the mountains by combining it with his already popularly proven style of satirical wit and skill as a showman. Coming as it did when travel to the Alps was getting faster and cheaper – as will be discussed presently – it became a winning combination.

Histories of mountaineering whilst giving much attention to Smith, nevertheless, credit Alfred Wills' 1854 climb of the Wetterhorn as the onset of what was later named 'the Golden Age' of Alpinism; this finished in 1865 when Whymper's party fell from the Matterhorn. Will's climb was neither a first ascent, nor a difficult summit but in 1856 *The Athenaeum* already claimed the climb 'an event in Alpine history.'[168] Freshfield's statement that,

> 'Wills played the same part with regard alpine climbing that Albert Smith did towards Swiss travel. The one helped to create the Alpine club, the other Cook's Tourists,'

was probably an accurate reflection of how many in the mountaineering world felt.[169] Smith may have widened awareness of the Alps to a broader demographic, but it was the developing middle class of clerics, lawyers,

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[165] Cunningham 1887, 13.
[166] Mathews 1898, 196.
[167] Thorington 1934, 153; Whymper 2008, 139.
[168] "Books of Travel." *The Athenaeum,* July 12, 1856.
[169] Freshfield 1912.

academics, professionals and businessmen, who particularly claimed the peaks as their own. This 'Golden Age', christened by Cunningham in 1887 and accepted almost without question in subsequent narratives, contains however, an inherent gender and racial bias; it is exclusively male and predominantly British.[170] The fact that Mrs Hamilton became the first British woman to climb Mont Blanc a month before Wills climbed the Wetterhorn has been overlooked, as have at least twenty female first ascents that occurred between 1854 – 1865.[171] As will be seen, women were involved in climbing from an early date but the prevailing rhetoric of heroic male success made it difficult for accounts of women's climbing to be recognised.

3.Travel and tourism

The legacy of Romanticism, the end of the Napoleonic wars and Albert Smith's extravaganza all made significant and different contributions to the development of mountaineering. However, it was easier, more comfortable and progressively cheaper transport that ensured the Alps became increasingly accessible to a wider population, particularly women. In 1821 the first steam-powered ferry crossed the Channel and by 1840 100,000 people were making the trip annually. It cost eight to ten shillings and took about three hours. By 1843 steamboats crossed all the large lakes of Switzerland and were on the Rhine, Rhone and Danube.[172]

In 1838, Murray's guidebook allowed 14 days to travel to Geneva, but by 1843 the journey from London to Paris was available by train and boat; consequently travel time to Geneva halved.[173] As the railways expanded times dropped even more; by 1852, the trip took only three days.[174] The cost of travel also decreased. In the mid 1830s a journey to Switzerland cost £20 but by the mid 1850s this was only £2.00.[175] To put this in perspective, average annual earnings for a clergyman or civil servant were between £220 and £270, an engineer or

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170 Cunningham 1887, 14.
171 A Tourist. "Letter to the Editor." *The Times*, Sept. 5,1854; see Appendix for list of women's climbs.
172 Buzard 1993, 41; Murray 1843, xvii.
173 Murray 1843, xlix.
174 Murray 1852, xlvii.
175 Hansen 1991, 54.

surveyor £360 - £470 but for a general labourer just £40- £44.[176] Clearly, the drop in price by the 1850s made travel to the Alps a possibility for those in the two middle-class occupations but remained highly unlikely for the latter. European travel was still a middle-class activity but whereas in the 1820s the cost – at six to ten per cent of the annual wage of most civil servants or clerics – meant only the wealthiest could travel; by the 1850s the decreased price enabled this section of the middle class to also journey abroad.

For women rail travel was particularly welcome and not only because of its speed. Trains avoided the inconvenience, even danger, of having to spend hours amongst strangers, often at remote inns, while the horses were rested; it lessened the risk of losing luggage, was warmer and more comfortable. Thomas Cook's European tours to the Alps, that began in 1863, provided the administrative organisation; probably for this reason they were popular with women.[177] Although 'ladies' welcomed improved travel facilities it is important to stress it merely encouraged something that already existed. Dorothy Wordsworth, the Parminters and others bear testimony that for several years before the arrival of railways or Thomas Cook women were a significant proportion of the visitors in the overflowing hotels of Geneva, Chamonix and elsewhere.[178] Mariana Starke, for example, was author of several popular guidebooks from as early as 1790; these predated the likes of Murray and Baedeker and were to be found in the possession of most English people abroad until 1830.[179] Easier and cheaper travel merely lowered the barriers of holidaying in Europe and thereby sucked in a wider spectrum of the population – both men and women – to enjoy what others had been savouring for some decades previously.

3.1.Tourist or traveller?

Not everyone welcomed the arrival of more people to the Alps. Ruskin's description of Albert Smith as a cockney was merely one instance of a more

[176] "Relative Value of Sums of Money" 2014.
[177] Morrell 1998 is an account by 'Miss Jemima' of the first Cook's tour to the Alps; Buzard 1993, 58.
[178] De Selincourt 1941; Heafford 2008; National Trust 2011; Williams 1798.
[179] Buzard 1993, 68–70.

general derogatory labelling of 'tourists'.[180] Those who were familiar with travelling in Europe often saw themselves as socially superior, part of an elite. Amongst some people there remained a certain exclusivity associated with visiting the continent that continued into the 1870s.[181] Traditionally the aristocracy and upper middle class travelled; most of the rest stayed at home – a relic from the Grand Tour.[182] Suddenly finding favourite hotels or villages overrun by 'cockneys, persons travelling with couriers, Americans doing Europe against time, Cook's tourists and commercial travellers,' prompted Leslie Stephen to fantasise about corralling them into one area leaving everywhere else free for those like himself.[183] Part of the attraction of travelling was to escape from normality, from the usual roles expected at home, to see and experience something different, even to possess, for a limited period, a changed persona.[184]

> Its sublime
> This perfect solitude of foreign lands!
> To be, as if you had not been till then,
> And were then, simply what you chose to be.[185]

wrote Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) in 1856, clearly delighting in her new Italian 'way of being'. If people you were abroad to avoid, however, invaded that 'perfect solitude', much of what was sought after was lost.

A snobbish division between tourist and traveller developed. As Buzard notes independent 'travellers' like Stephen felt they possessed a more refined aesthetic appreciation than 'tourists' reliant on organised tours or guidebooks.[186] Mountaineers definitely aspired to be 'travellers' rather than tourists. Their desire to avoid the crowds stimulated many to seek out new areas - ones that were often more inaccessible or difficult to reach. In 1860, mountain explorer Jane Freshfield (1814-1901) for example, revelled in out-of-the-way places. Her book described 'leaving well-known routes … to acquaint ourselves with the

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180 See also Edwards 1873; James 2010, 123–124; Stephen 1904, 49, 54–55, 74–5,127–129.
181 For impatience with this attitude & a plea for tolerance see Plunket 1875, 12.
182 Buzard 2002.
183 Stephen 1904, 128.
184 Stephen 1904, 76.
185 Barrett Browning 1857, 317.
186 Buzard 1993, 6–7.

byways and higher passes of the Alps.'[187] Amelia Edwards (1831-1892) in 1872 explored remote areas of the Dolomites, 'to leave London and Paris behind' and to escape 'from hackneyed sights, from overcrowded hotels, from the dreary routine of table d'hôtes, from the flood of Cook's tourists.'[188]

Easier, quicker transport systems and organised tours had a twofold effect on the development of mountaineering. Clearly, they gave improved access to the Alps allowing more people to experience the mountains, but equally these increased numbers risked destroying the very solitude and uniqueness of experience that was sought after. This pushed climbers to seek less popular areas, more difficult routes to a summit and increasingly challenging climbs. In that sense tourists encouraged wider exploration and the spread of Alpinism. Stephen claimed these more remote places stimulated a deeper rapport with the terrain.

> in the silent solitudes of the high Alps.... you become conscious of another fact to which the common variety of tourist is necessarily insensible. You begin to find out for the first time what the mountains really are. [189]

Buzard uses Bourdieu's idea of habitus to explain the division he perceives between traveller and tourist. Their habitus marked them as belonging to a particular group or class as denoted by their carriage, actions, speech, thoughts and sometimes their gender.[190] In the case of travellers, this was a group that, as Stephen's remarks make clear, felt possessed of a superior aesthetic sensibility that was denied to the 'common variety of tourist'.

Buzard's use of habitus is persuasive. However, his claim that the habitus of a 'traveller' was invariably male and that of a 'tourist' female is not supported where climbers were concerned. Stephen, Freshfield and Edwards, who regularly visited relatively unexplored Alpine regions, clearly saw themselves as travellers rather than tourists. They shared similar thoughts and feelings about mountains as a place and how they should be appreciated: as such these people could be seen to share a habitus. On the other hand Freshfield and Edwards

[187] Freshfield 1861, 2.
[188] Edwards 1873, ii.
[189] Stephen 1904, 334.
[190] Bourdieu 1977, 72-95, 159-197.

clearly were not men. There were also marked differences in the manner and difficulty of the explorations they undertook compared to Stephen. All of which weakens the notion of a completely unifying habitus.

Nevertheless, for women, the contrast between the traveller and tourist was often to prove helpful. Improved safety and comfort, plus the availability of organised tours, tempted some women to venture into Europe for the first time as tourists. It gave them the opportunity to travel and see for themselves the highlights of European landscapes and cities.[191] The self-confidence they drew from this experience as a tourist could then act to transform them into more adventurous travellers. A group of four young women, for example, in 1874 were taken to Chamonix by an older female chaperone, intending to follow the usual tourist trail of guided walks on glaciers and some lower peaks. However, the freedom and challenge of the mountainous terrain resulted in three of them making an unplanned ascent of Mont Blanc. Subsequently they walked and climbed over several remote passes en route to Zermatt.[192] These women had begun their holiday as tourists but developed a taste for the less beaten path and assumed the mantle of travellers in the process.

4.Summary

By the mid 1850s it is evident that several different elements coincided to encourage an interest in mountain exploration that opened a new space for women with the financial means and confidence to travel independently. Alpine climbing had drawn upon a romantic, poetic and artistic legacy. It also flourished in an age where social prophets such as Carlyle and Ruskin were lamenting the rise of urbanisation and industrialism. Alpinism was the apotheosis of this shift in the emotional response to and investment in unsullied landscape. This increasing valorisation of a dramatic, rugged nature to be admired and climbed existed alongside geological debates over the age of the earth, and consideration of mankind's place within the process of evolution. Albert Smith's diorama encouraged increasing numbers of middle-class people to visit the Alps aided by cheaper, faster, more comfortable modes of transport, and organised tours. Many

191 Morrell 1998.
192 Five Ladies 2003.

in Britain, had savoured the 1851 Great Exhibition, and revelled in a confidence born of the nation's pre-eminent, economic place in the world order. Many issues, therefore, both cultural and material converged to encourage an almost unquestioned belief in progress, in British power and in the right to explore other nation's landscapes. All these factors coalesced to facilitate both the desire and the means for individuals and groups to experience the mountains.

In one sense Alpinism reflected the dominant values of the mid-Victorian age – progress, hardwork and self-help. On the other hand the mountaineer could enjoy accessing a realm that had the potential to challenge the conventions of the time, in search of unique and ineffable experiences, far from the customs of life in Britain. Burnet discovered this pleasure in the seventeenth century; in the nineteenth numerous walkers and climbers also experienced how the mountains could influence their lives. It is to these men and women I now turn.

Chapter 2. ‘No Manlier Sport in the World’.[1]

Men and Mountaineering

Nineteenth-century writers often described mountaineering as a quintessentially male activity. Climbing was associated with independence, strength and a questing nature; all attributes that aligned with Victorian society’s idealistic vision of men.[2] Historians have largely left this notion unchallenged. If female mountaineers are acknowledged they are often portrayed as exceptional, odd or eccentric women.[3] With few exceptions the association of men with mountaineering has continued, and the view that the high Alps was an almost exclusively male preserve maintained. The linking of a particular place with a specific gender, however, reflects the power and meaning of social relations within a culture.[4] Limiting or frustrating people’s access can be a way a group exerts, and tries to maintain, its influence and authority within society.

The male mountaineer is often seen as heroic, risking all to achieve glory on some unclimbed summit. This is a vision of an indomitable masculinity pitted against the elements.[5] It is a familiar trope that still has currency. It is clearly seen in the renewed interest in Mallory and Irvine’s disappearance, the fifty-year anniversary of Tenzing and Hilary’s climb in 2003 and Kenton Cool’s first traverse of the Everest horseshoe in 2013.[6] Despite the development of women’s climbing over the past fifty years, the association of mountaineering with men remains; it has almost become something of a cliché. Clichés, however, have an origin and resonate with wider values; they do not arise in a vacuum.

Much of the association of men with mountaineering originates around the middle of the nineteenth century; at this time Alpinism was thought of as an

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1 Le Blond 1903, ix preface.
2 Forbes 1857, 287–8; Whymper 1981, 161.
3 Brown 2002; Hansen 1991; Middleton 1993; Mazel 1994; O’Gorman 2000; Ring 2000. For the best recognition of women’s presence on the mountain see Colley 2010. Osborne 2004 covers a later period dealing with the formation of women’s climbing club.
4 Massey 1994, 2–5.
5 Bayers 2003, 8, claims alpine holidays allowed men to “underscore...their masculine virility”; Gilchrist 2008.
6 Cool 2012; Douglas 1999; Sky News 2013; Davis 2011.

activity that encouraged 'manliness.'[7] This chapter considers men's relationship with climbing and the mountains, their notions of gendered identity and the diversity of masculinities in evidence. It is important because it provides the context within which women climbers were embedded. Before pursuing this subject further, however, it is helpful to clarify what exactly was meant by manliness.

1. Masculinity and Manliness

Masculinity is the analytical category used today to study what it is 'to be male'. For most of the nineteenth century, however, manliness was the commonly used term to express male behaviour and attributes. The OED cites its use as early as 1384. By contrast, the first reference to masculinity is 1785 and then only to mention its French origin; it was not regularly used in English until the early twentieth century.[8] Manliness denoted the open display of a man's character, his self-control and public behaviour.[9] Oliver Goldsmith, for example, wrote how a husband consoled his wife in 'the silent manliness of grief', while Sheridan suggested the submission of troops 'required more of their manliness than to charge all the hosts of Buonaparte.'[10] Both imply a quiet, reserved, steely inner strength and self-discipline rather than brash, ill-considered displays of aggression. Edward Whymper, in 1871, expands and develops these qualities in the context of mountaineering,

> We exult over the grandeur of the scenes that are brought before our eyes, the splendours of sunrise and sunset and the beauties of hill, dale, lake, wood and waterfall; but we value more highly the development of manliness, and the evolution, under combat with difficulties, of those noble qualities of human nature – courage, patience, endurance and fortitude.[11]

'Noble qualities' were thought to be an essential element of manliness. Again, it was as much about character as action, a desire to protect the weak from the strong, to uphold justice regardless of personal cost, to have courage and

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[7] "Alpine Climbing," *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle,* July 19,1873; Allbutt. "On the Health & Training of Mountaineers." *AJ,* 8, 1876: 30-40.

[8] In a search of *The Times* 1850-1900, masculinity appears for the first time in 1887 & is used only 8 times before 1900. Manliness in the same period is quoted 784 times.

[9] Smiles 1871, 140.

[10] "Manliness, N." 2014.

[11] Whymper 1981, 161. First published 1871

patience to persist in the face of immense difficulties. This was evident in an 1874 competition, held by the periodical *Kind Words* to define the meaning of manliness. One contributor, echoing Whymper, described manliness as 'A rare beautiful blending of boldness, bravery, goodness and nobility.'[12] It is telling that this competition was held in a magazine for the young. Manly qualities were what most middle- class parents hoped their sons would acquire as they made their way to maturity.[13]

Several historians criticise the use of 'manliness' preferring the broader term, and overarching category, 'masculinity,' as this incorporates the shifting nature of sex and sexual relationships.[14] This approach does indeed provide extremely important insights into how we, in the twenty-first century, view and understand the male in the nineteenth. However, the historian Rob Boddice is surely correct that using masculinity exclusively to determine how Victorian men understood themselves, risks being anachronistic.[15] Masculinity, like the word gender discussed previously, was not employed in the nineteenth century with the same frequency or meaning it has today. Victorian men did not publicise or openly discuss sexuality, which, unsurprisingly given the social mores of the period, remained private. Boddice makes the point that even Oscar Wilde was thought manly right up to his trial in 1895.[16] For most men the way they presented themselves, or were seen by others, did not hinge on their sexuality, but on the public display of their behaviour, morality and character. In this thesis, therefore, the concept of manliness, as a subdivision of the larger analytical category masculinity, often provides better insights into how middle-class men saw themselves and as importantly, how others perceived them.

Manliness, like most attributes of gender, only exists in relation to something 'other'.[17] A distinct demarcation needs a comparison. The public schools, as well

[12] Various. "Original Definitions. True Manliness." *Kind Words*, July 1,1874.
[13] Roper and Tosh 1991; Tosh 2007, 102–122; Boyd 2003, 45–69.
[14] Tosh 1994; Francis 2002.
[15] Boddice 2008.
[16] Boddice 2008, 3.
[17] The importance of the relativity of the different sexes occurs in most influential historical studies of gender. The following are a representative sample Butler 2006; Poovey 1988; Roper and Tosh 1991; Scott 1988a; Tosh 1999.

as all-male clubs and societies, were one way of providing this. With an absence of women, often Spartan conditions, a concentration on physical prowess and discouragement of displays of emotion, the public schools attempted to lead boys away from the cosy, protected world of home into the tougher more independent life that awaited them as young men.[18] The fictional Tom Brown provided a glimpse of public school life to a wider reading public. Here, despite battling the harshness of school life, displaying fluctuating behaviour and self-doubt, Tom emerges the winner in both a moral and physical sense.[19] Mountaineer Leslie Stephen described approvingly how emotions were curtailed at school,

> 'domestic affections' [were] mere nuisances which ought to be studiously suppressed...to allow their existence to be manifest … is a distinct act of indecency, if not of immorality.[20]

One of the principal reasons middle-class families sent their sons to such institutions was to aid the transformation from boyhood to manhood; from dependence to independence; from a female to a male environment; from the privacy of home to the public world of school.[21] 'We must watch with a jealous eye, the insidious temptations of a life of ease,' one mother wrote, 'lest we should imperil for our sons the hereditary character of manliness.'[22] Even before Herbert Spencer had spoken of 'survival of the fittest,' Victorian society embraced the notion that a certain amount of privation, suffering and struggle was good for both body and soul.[23]

Manliness on this basis equated with a certain chivalric notion of honourable strength, courage, honesty, nobleness and independence of character that fought for and protected the vulnerable. Its heroism endured against all odds, embracing victory and loss with equanimity. These qualities fitted with the mediaeval revival that occurred at this time; the chivalric knight in some sense was the epitome of manliness for many Victorians. Gothic interest affected

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[18] Mangan 2010.
[19] Hughes 1859; Deane 2014, 120–132 describes how school simultaneously broke the link with home and inculcated moral and "manly" behaviour.
[20] Stephen 1873.
[21] Tosh 2007, 118–119.
[22] Una. "A Bell-Harness for Boys." *The Lady's Newspaper*, January 31, 1863.
[23] Spencer 1871, 1:444.

various aspects of life as seen in the architecture of the rebuilt Houses of Parliament, novels such as Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and in much of the writing and criticism of Ruskin.[24] Just as boys were sent away at a young age to be squires in mediaeval England, so many families in the nineteenth century felt manly qualities were often best forged in the fires of privation, away from the protection of family life, in a usually all-male environment.

Any notion, however, that manliness was a unitary phenomenon to be simply defined must be abandoned. Historian James Eli Adams in his study of eight major Victorian writers - selected for their notable influence on wider society – has shown the complex, shifting and multiple nature of manliness; these range from Carlyle's 'hero as a man of letters' to Kingsley's Christianity and Pater's muscular aestheticism.[25] The different sides in the debate over the cruelty of hunting in 1870 used manliness equally strongly to support their conflicting opinions.[26] Manliness in the nineteenth century meant different things to different people; it cannot be singularly and inflexibly defined. The opposing sides debating Governor Eyre's role in the Jamaican revolt of 1865, for example, both invoked aspects of manliness to buttress their completely contrasting positions. Thomas Carlyle supported Eyre's patriarchal, racist stance whilst John Stuart Mill advocated the 'manly' moral position that maintained all men be treated equally.[27] Manliness, clearly, was a complex issue. Norman Vance identified three types, chivalric, physical and moral.[28] John Tosh has shown how the membership of all male groups and the responsibility of a family, particularly containing children, was a significant marker of male maturity. He maintains that men such as Ruskin and Mill suffered loss of status because of their childlessness.[29] Manliness, it would seem, had a domestic as well as a public face.

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[24] Ruskin 1865. Although well known for the submissive role given to women, *Sesame & Lilies* also highlights the chivalric responsibilities of men in which protecting and guarding women play a major part.
[25] Eli Adams 1995.
[26] Boddice 2008.
[27] Boyd 2003, 139; Hall 1992a.
[28] Vance 1985, 8–28.
[29] Tosh 2007, 80. Interestingly he does not include Carlyle in this list, despite similar childlessness.

Differences in perceptions of manliness also occurred between generations and social classes. For Carlyle's father, a working-class Calvinist mason, 'man was created to work [physically], not to speculate or feel or dream'. Carlyle himself was shocked at the change in his friend Edward Irving when he became an attentive and devoted father – something Carlyle regarded as unmanly.[30] Just in this small social circle three different displays of 'manliness' were evident, the physical stonemason, the high-minded intellectual, and the family man. What they all shared, however, were positions that exerted control, superiority and responsibility; all inherent components of manliness.

The primacy of physicality, as seen by Carlyle's father, over other forms of activity is a reminder that many of the middle class came from humble origins. For the working class being physically fit was an essential element of manliness. It meant the ability to provide for and protect a family. The burgeoning middle class of lawyers, merchants, clergymen, doctors and intellectuals were no longer earning their living by physical means. They needed to underline their manliness in a different manner to that of their forebears. As Eli Adams has outlined, new social statuses and hierarchies developed to replace this 'old idea of manhood.'[31] Membership of all-male adventurous institutions, like the AC or Royal Geographical Society (RGS), was one strategy, becoming a heroic 'Captain of Industry' as proposed by Carlyle was another and being wealthy enough to support a large household and achieve success in professional or business life was yet another.[32] The anxiety surrounding the 'manly' status of professional middle-class men and the necessity to raise their work to a higher level of importance and appreciation is seen in Thomas Carlyle's lecture 'The Hero as Man of Letters'. This aimed to elevate the status of writers, like him and by association other intellectuals and academics, to a position of honour and esteem.[33] He equated their work with that of priests and prophets; they were the 'heroes' who would lead less able sections of society to the higher grounds of

30 Clarke 1991, 42.
31 Eli Adams 1995, 5.
32 Carlyle 1850; Tosh 2007, 24.
33 Clarke 1991.

sanctity.[34] The term 'man of letters,' by assigning a gender, acts as a marker against what it is distinguishing itself from. It stakes out and claims that occupation for men alone; there was no comparable status entitled 'a woman of letters', the eponymous activity was 'manly'.

Despite these claims for varying interpretations of manliness, physicality remained a central marker of developing maturity, particularly for young men. This was championed by the ethos of the public schools that held success in sport on a par with, and occasionally in excess of, academic prowess.[35] Mountaineering was popular because it was seen as an activity that encouraged many of the qualities that Victorian middle-class society associated with manliness. As one contributor to *The Times* in 1873 wrote, 'Alpine climbing subjects a man to a training that is both moral and physical.'[36] The mountains provided an outlet for adventure, courage, independence, physicality and conquest in an environment that was, like many public schools, often as brutal as it was benign. It was also seen as predominantly male.

The concept of manliness, however, is made yet more complex because the term was also used, in a positive sense, for women and boys to denote *moral* maturity.[37] Honour, self-control, courage in adversity, fortitude, loyalty, honesty, and perseverance were all attributes that attracted the 'manliness' epithet but were qualities not necessarily exclusive to one particular gender.[38] The title of this chapter declares there was 'no manlier sport in the world than mountaineering': it is a quote from Elizabeth Le Blond who became the first president of the Ladies Alpine Club in 1907. Clearly, as a woman, she did not feel the 'manliness' of the sport a deterrent to her participation.

There were, however, more exclusively gendered characteristics of manliness that made it possible to draw a greater distinction between men and most women. In the second half of the nineteenth century these were becoming independent, leaving the parental home, having physical or intellectual prowess

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34 Carlyle 1841.
35 Mangan 2000.
36 "Alpine Climbing." *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle,* July 19, 1873.
37 Boyd 2003, 45; Eli Adams 1995, 10; Smiles 1871, 140.
38 Eli Adams 1995, 14.

and possessing *self*-discipline with influence and control over *others*. Judith Butler's work has claimed gender is enacted through repetitive performances and rituals and is always seen in relation to something 'different' from itself.[39] Associating particular behaviours, and responsibilities, certain sports, types of dress and occupations with either men or women underlined the binary nature of gender. This was something that most people in the nineteenth century, at least until the closing decades, left unquestioned.[40] Raising the status of 'men of letters' as Carlyle attempted, maintaining an exclusively male membership of professional or social organisations such as the AC, and male-only suffrage all helped keep a separation. It maintained the division of the sexes, and importantly, promoted a gender hierarchy. Manliness could only be seen in relationship to what it was demarcating itself from; this generally was the weakness and vulnerability associated with femininity and accusations of idleness and foppery linked to a luxurious aristocracy.[41]

1.1 Alpine Club

The AC, which excluded women, became emblematic of the perceived maleness of mountaineering. Most 'Gentlemen's' clubs began in the nineteenth century. The development and role played by these clubs, in the life of Victorian men, has attracted much attention from historians.[42] The AC, although it attracted people from similar social backgrounds to other London clubs, did not have overnight rooms. It therefore played little part in the suggested 'flight from domesticity' that John Tosh feels attracted some men to 'club-life' in the last thirty years of the century.[43] Until 1895 the club rented premises near Trafalgar Square that served merely as rooms for lectures and dinners. It eventually moved to Mayfair – the more traditional area for clubs – but retained its original format. Membership originally was restricted not only to men but also to those who had climbed higher than 13000 feet. The latter was quickly changed, however, to enable socially desirable candidates who had climbed very little, such as the poet

39 Butler 2006.
40 See Laqueur 1990 for how perceptions of sexual difference changed over time.
41 Eli Adams 1995, 98–99, 208–212.
42 Francis 2002; Gunn 2000, 95; Hearn 1992; Huggins 2000; Milne-Smith 2006; Tosh 1994; Tosh 1999, 183, 185.
43 Tosh 2005, 107 N.B the flight from domesticity discussed here concerns middle-class men not elites.

Matthew Arnold, to join. Formed in 1857 by a group of climbing friends, the initial aim of the club was to 'dine together once a year,' share information about expeditions and publish, annually or biennially, an account of member's activities.[44] It was not envisaged as an 'important society…making contributions to geographical & topographical knowledge' that it eventually became.[45]

Although few members were aristocratic there was nevertheless a certain social aspiration, or awareness, attached to the club. When selecting a venue for their first dinner, for example, barrister Thomas Hinchliff wrote to fellow mountaineer Edward Kennedy that the simple Crown Hotel in Holborn 'is hardly the style of place which would be likely to please the majority.'[46] Once the climbing qualification was eased a committee decided membership and the voting mechanism enabled one blackball in ten to exclude any new member thought inappropriate. This led to some talented mountaineers such as Fred Mummery and George Passingham, both of whom had achieved first ascents, initially being denied membership whilst figures of lesser ability but greater social prestige such as the Viceroy of India, Earl Minto, were elected.[47]

Despite this, the club attracted men from all aspects of predominantly upper middle-class life. Politics, the civil service, law, science, medicine, the church, business and academia were all well represented; disciplines that were, of course, almost exclusively male. Although membership remained small – there were just 823 members between 1857 and 1900 – because many people held positions of influence or power their impact belied their relatively small numbers.[48] William Longman, for example, who was a member of the club from its inception, was just one of several publishers who ensured books by members reached a wider public. This in itself helped develop and perpetuate the notion that mountaineering was exclusively male. John Tyndall and James Forbes maintained the profile of mountaineering within scientific circles. Archbishops,

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44 Hort 1878.
45 William Longman quoted in Lunn 1957, 42.
46 Hinchliffe, "T W Hinchliffe to E S Kennedy." 1858, January 22. AC. London.
47 Lunn 1957, 99.
48 For a more in depth analysis of the background of AC members see Hansen 1991, 107 - 161.

headmasters of public schools, MPs and diplomats all ensured the tentacles of influence spread widely.

Despite the common bond of the mountains and the possession of a certain social cachet, club members, particularly those who were climbers rather than largely social participants, were a varied mixture. Just as there were multiple styles of manliness so there were different types of climber; they did not fall into any one category or belief system. Many were pioneers in their own field, people who had made discoveries, started new businesses, wrote, analysed and thought tangentially to others. Although there were Anglican clergymen, like the Bishops of Durham and Bristol, many men were nonconformists – often Quakers or Unitarians and several, like Tyndall and Leslie Stephen, had either lost or never had any religious conviction. A number of them would fit the 'unconventional' label. Such people included the waspish Edward Whymper, the engraver who became obsessed by, and then took part in the tragic first ascent of the Matterhorn; the physicist Michael Faraday who, despite illness, walked forty four miles in under eleven hours over the Gemmi pass (2314m); John Ruskin who viewed mountains as cathedrals of great learning and the Rev. Francis Wethered, the first man to climb the Matterhorn in a day from Zermatt, who bathed in the Thames every morning, summer or winter, even beyond his seventieth birthday.[49]

These men are just some of the varied and eccentric people who made up the male climbing community. Although they all, to some extent, upheld a vision of manliness typified by adventure, independence, power, strength and exploration, individually they were often original characters who defy easy pigeonholing. Many were free thinkers, keen to consider and develop new and unusual ideas or viewpoints.[50] Arguably, it was people with innovatory and questioning sides to their personalities who were attracted to the mountains, where life was often unpredictable and challenging. In the mountains, after all, it was essential to be able to think and react for oneself – to be quick to evaluate and adapt when

[49] Clark 1953, 25–26.
[50] For detail of AC members occupations see Hansen 1991, 470.

necessary. These characteristics were equally prevalent in female as well as male climbers, as will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

The AC may have appeared as a unified front of mountain men epitomising all that Victorian Britain identified with an idealistic vision of heroic manliness but, in reality, it was a heterogeneous mixture of people who often held widely differing views on many aspects of life; it was the common interest in mountains and climbing that united them.

1.2 Variation within Mountaineering

Men's motivations for mountaineering varied, as did the manner in which they climbed. Whilst some young men undoubtedly viewed their summer Alpine tour as an opportunity to demonstrate their physical fitness, their independence from home, their competitive spirit in getting to an unclimbed summit first or faster than others, these ambitions did not apply to everyone. Mountaineering, indeed, was not confined to the young; several men continued climbing into late middle age and, as this thesis demonstrates, women were often seen amongst the high peaks.[51] It is true that certain men were fixated on unclimbed peaks but many more were interested in simply 'being there'.[52] Botany or geology interested many people whilst art was more important for others.[53]Several climbers enjoyed the physical exertion of mountaineering whereas some regarded it as merely a 'necessary evil'.[54] Many men and women it seems enjoyed the social whirl of the climbing community, where others preferred to remain more distant.[55] Although most men climbed in all-male company plenty welcomed, even encouraged, women to accompany them.[56] Evidently, neither mountaineering nor manliness conformed to tightly bound, immutable definitions.

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51 Francis Walker climbed the Matterhorn, Weisshorn & Castor aged 62 in 1871.
52 Whymper & Freshfield are examples of the 1st group, Wills the 2nd
53 Mr Packe & Alfred Wills were botanists, Tyndall, Forbes were geologists and Ruskin an artist
54 Leslie Stephen enjoyed the pure physicality whilst for Douglas Freshfield it was a mere necessity.
55 Fox Tuckett, 1920.
56 Leslie Stephen was in the first group, A W Moore, F Mummery, H S Wilson, WC Slingsby, H Carr, F Gardiner are examples of the 2nd.

2. Men, Women and Mountains

Clearly, therefore, the monolithic notion of the heroic, brothers-in-arms, Victorian male mountaineer, who marginalised women and concentrated on claiming summits either for himself, or for the nation, needs some revision. By considering the lives and attitudes of several prominent male climbers it is possible to uncover a more varied and complex picture of Victorian men's mountaineering. This reveals the different relationships that existed with the environment, the varied approaches men had to exercise and exploration, and helps unravel the greater complexity of gender relations that existed within mountaineering; a complexity that has been largely ignored in previous studies and which is central to this work.

2.1 Alfred Wills

Alfred Wills (1828-1912) was the person credited with triggering the 'Golden Age' of mountaineering; a period exclusively associated with men. Despite playing such a pivotal role within alpinism, it was important for Wills to share the Alps with his wife and family. The all-male aspect of mountaineering, that fellow climbers such as Leslie Stephen, E S Kennedy, Edward Whymper and Charles Hudson clearly enjoyed, did not hold the same attraction for Wills.

As Hansen remarks, Wills was in many ways an outsider.[57] As a Unitarian, he went to the non-conformist University College, London rather than Oxbridge. For the first twenty years of his professional life, as a lawyer and judge, he worked on the more distant north-eastern and midland circuits rather than in the capital. Only from 1872 did his career blossom when he was made QC. In 1884 he was knighted and appointed a judge of the Queen's Bench at the High Court. He is renowned for sentencing Oscar Wilde in 1895.

Although credited with beginning the new enthusiasm for mountaineering, Alfred Wills' approach to climbing was not characterised by the kind of heroic displays of manliness already described in this thesis. All-male company, competition, domination of nature or, as Leslie Stephen subsequently expressed, a desire for the immortality that went with being the first to a summit, do not

[57] Hansen 1991, 134.

appear prime motivating factors.[58] Douglas Freshfield, a fellow mountaineer, felt Wills 'belonged to the generation that was inspired by Wordsworth...rather than...Ruskin'; a romantic rather than an analyst.[59]

Will's first book *Wanderings in the High Alps* (1858) certainly has a wide-ranging, sensitive feel; one that delights as much in the flora and fauna, the views and ambience of the mountains as the actual ascent of a pass or glacier.[60] It shares that attitude with another book written at a similar time, *Summer Months Among the Alps* (1857) by fellow mountaineer Thomas Hinchliff.[61] These lack the sense of machismo and cultural criticism evident in Stephen's *The Playground of Europe* (1871), which is discussed later in the chapter*.* Even the titles are suggestive of different aims. 'Wanderings' conjures notions of enjoyable but possibly unplanned and aimless explorations whereas 'Playground' produces ideas of games and competition, of winners and losers. Wills had an holistic enjoyment of the mountains as seen in the botanical notes he kept for all his excursions.[62]

Rather than mountaineering being a male club, Wills was keen for his wife to be involved and enjoy the Alps.

> I experienced a growing desire to introduce my wife to some of the wilder and grander features of glacier scenery and to give her a little insight into what exploring the recesses of the High Alps really involved.[63]

One of his aims in publishing his book was not merely to share the experience of his climbs, but also to encourage 'ladies [to] see much more of the grander scenery of the High Alps.' He devoted all of chapter two to this purpose. It detailed the expedition made on their honeymoon to the Aiguilles de Tacul, a rocky outcrop in the middle of the Mer de Glace above Chamonix. This outing, he

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58 Stephen 1904, 16. Climbing guidebooks usually contain details of those who achieved the first ascent.
59 Freshfield 1912, 488.
60 Wills 1858, 49, 107, 111, 167, are just a representative sample, amongst many, of his observations of nature.
61 Hinchliff 1857. Hinchliff was Stephen's frequent climbing companion even though they were very different personalities.
62 Taylor 2006, 359; Wills 1858, x, 93.
63 Wills 1858, 34.

claimed, was 'as feasible for any other lady as for the lady who actually performed it.'[64]

A closer look at this excursion shows more clearly both the nature of mountaineering adopted by Wills and importantly, the relationship he had with his wife, Lucy. Alfred wanted his new wife to experience the 'wilder and grander features' of the mountains. Walking on the Mer de Glace, a common activity for visitors to Chamonix, was insufficient. Wills decided they should camp overnight on the lower reaches of the Aiguille de Tacul. One reason for camping, rather than staying in the nearby mountain hut, was supposedly to ensure a better night's sleep for his wife.[65] This, however, was surely a highly tenuous motive. A rocky recess in the middle of a glacier, open to the elements at an altitude of 2300 metres, was unlikely to provide greater comfort than the more sheltered hut lower down. Obviously he was keen his wife experienced the mountains at close quarters and it can only be assumed she agreed to this adventure. Lucy later wrote to her mother- in-law,

> I had no idea that I should enjoy Switzerland so much. I am almost as well now about the glaciers as Alfred is and that is saying a good deal.[66]

Although Lucy was a willing partner, there is no doubt she occupied a subaltern position. Alfred was definitely 'in charge'. Lucy's status, moreover, was clearly one that demanded specific care and concern – this was her honeymoon after all. Consequently, the guides were careful to give the couple the most comfortable quarters – but this was relative. Their night on the glacier had some memorable and amusing moments.

> 'I cannot honestly say we slept very soundly. The floor of our cavern was on a considerable slope and I found myself in a state of constant effort to keep myself from sliding out at the lower end. Sometimes, I was smothered in the bed-clothes; sometimes, I awoke from a doze with a shiver and found all the coverings had left me in a visit to someone else,'[67] bemoaned Alfred.

[64] Wills 1858, vii.
[65] Wills 1858, 34.
[66] Letter quoted in Hansen, p. 295.
[67] Wills 1858, 47.

The mountain hut would clearly have been more comfortable but would have defeated Wills aim of sharing the mountains with the person whom he loved. It speaks of the relationship he felt both for the alpine environment and for his wife. The important point is he felt no need to keep them separate. He had a genuine desire to meld the two together; for her to experience the mountains at close quarters. There can be few better places to do that than the glaciated scenery of the Mont Blanc Massif as drawn by Lucy in figure 4.

> A more delightful evening was never passed, than we spent seated around that rhododendron fire, on the shore of that great sea of ice.[68]



Figure 4. Night Encampment on the Mer De Glace, 1854, by Lucy Wills who includes herself in the bottom right hand corner.[69]

Lucy's letters show a shared love of the mountains even though she was apprehensive about her walking capabilities.[70] Alfred encouraged her, claiming she was 'a capital mountaineer.'[71] During this summer tour Lucy also climbed the Gumihorn (2020m), Torrenthorn (2998m) and made several glacier excursions in Grindelwald and Chamonix. No major ascents were attempted, however, nor did she climb in the serious manner of female mountaineers discussed later; her ascents were more extended walks and she sometimes rode part of the way.

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68 Wills 1858, 44.
69 Wills 1858, 41.
70 Hansen 1991, 295.
71 Wills 1858, 38.

Nevertheless, these excursions were lengthy, sometimes lasting fourteen-hours and required a good level of physical fitness.[72]

Every effort was made to provide a greater level of personal comfort than usual. The food was lavish, 'bread, butter, cold chicken and mutton, cheese, biscuits and raisins. Salt and sugar were not forgotten; and a stock of potatoes lay at our feet to roast in the ashes of our wood-fire.' Balmat, their guide, even brought 'a table cloth for the rock' and made 'mulled St George' with spices.[73] Although provisions were important on all expeditions, this excursion had certain sophistications about it. Climbing the Wetterhorn a few weeks later Wills wistfully recalled, 'We felt the want of that refinement of good cheer, which the company of a lady gives a fair excuse for indulging in.'[74] He clearly felt no embarrassment admitting a preference for such 'feminine' comforts – something rarely confessed to by climbers such as Leslie Stephen.

Alfred Wills eventually built a chalet for his family in the Alps and the sole architect was Lucy. She was a talented artist; her 'scale-drawings did not require correction.'[75] She also illustrated both Alfred's books. An insight into the closeness of their relationship, as well as her appreciation of mountains, can be seen by the drawings she made of Alfred's famous ascent of the Wetterhorn. The last section of the climb is renowned for a large overhanging cornice, which has to be cut through to gain the summit. Wills atmospheric description is worth quoting in full,

> The cornice curled over towards us, like the crest of a wave, breaking at irregular intervals along the line into pendants and inverted pinnacles of ice, many of which hung down to the full length of a tall man's height.[76]

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72 Wills 1858, 33–60.
73 Wills 1858, 44–46.
74 Wills 1858, 282.
75 Wills 1860, 118.
76 Wills 1858, 293.

The cornice still exists today as shown in figure 5 looming over the climber.[77]

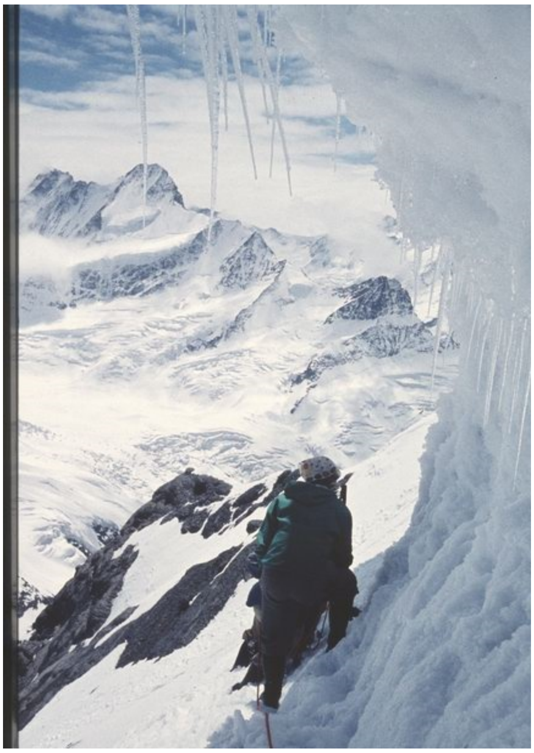


Figure 5. A climber underneath a cornice near the summit of the Wetterhorn. (Alpenkalb 2001)

Lucy Wills' sketch of Alfred's ascent (figure 6) depicts an almost identical situation, albeit drawn from face on. Although Lucy did not accompany him on climbs like these, Alfred shared his experiences with her so closely that her drawings were uncannily accurate. They 'caught the exact *character* of the scene...the view of the actual crest and the overhanging cornice could hardly have been more true to reality, had it been taken on the spot,' he remarked.[78]

[77] http://www.summitpost.org/wetterhorn/150630
[78] Wills 1858, ix–x.



Figure 6. Arrival at the Wetterhorn Summit by Lucy Wills 1858.[79]

Crucially Wills included his wife, whenever possible, in his climbing; for him, family life and the mountains were inextricably interwoven, sharing the Alpine experience was important. His chalet in the French Alps became a social centre for many climbers. Lucy Walker and Jane Freshfield are just two of many mountaineers who visited. Figure 7 of 'The Wills Arms' gives some impression of the sociability enjoyed there.

Wills' books also stimulated others, both men and women, to travel to the Alps and discover a similar passion for the hills.[80] He was one of the earliest members of the AC; he knew the thrill of standing on summits where few had been before; he understood the 'manly' enjoyment to be had from exploration, of a job well done often in the harshest of environments. Despite this, mountaineering for him was not primarily an all-male activity. In 1870, for example, a large party of women including Bertha, his second wife whom he married after Lucy's sudden death in 1860, and Edith his fifteen-year-old daughter, went with him to the Grand Mulets hut below Mont Blanc.[81] It is unclear whether they continued to the summit on this occasion but they did in 1873. The women then, as previously,

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[79] Wills 1858, 295.
[80] Jane Freshfield was prompted to explore Sixt and the Col d'Anterne after reading *The Eagles Nest* (1860). Freshfield 1861, 91–93; Freshfield 1912.
[81] The group also included Ann Norton & Fanny Hayes. *Visitors book for the Grand Mulets* 1865.

outnumbered the men with the artist Gabriel Loppé and his daughter also accompanying them.[82]



Figure 7. Alfred Wills at the bottom of the steps with his family and staff outside their chalet, The Eagle's Nest, Sixt, France, circa 1880.[83]

Alfred Wills was not unusual in enjoying the mountains with his wife and family. Robert Spence-Watson and his wife, Elizabeth, also went to the Alps on their honeymoon. Unlike Lucy Wills, Elizabeth was a serious mountaineer claiming two female first ascents in 1862 and 1864.[84] Like the Wills family the Spence-Watson's retained a love of the mountains all their life and later climbed with their daughters (see figure 42).[85] Several husbands climbed with their wives. Notable examples are Stephen and Emma Winkworth, Jane and William Forster, Mabel and Norman Neruda, Edward and Margaret Jackson and James and Margaret Leman. Others such as Adolfus Moore, Horace Walker, the Pilkington brothers, Cecil Slingsby, Ellis Carr, Fred Gardiner and Charles Pasteur climbed either with their own or with their friend's sisters, cousins or wives.[86] This great

[82] *Visitors Book for the Grand Mulets* 1865.
[83] Clark 1953, 34.
[84] Spence Watson 1863. "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson."
[85] Beck 2013; Spence Watson 1969.
[86] Mumm 1923; Moore 1939; Norman-Neruda & Norman-Neruda 1899.

variety of people clearly suggests wide acceptance, in some quarters, for women's presence on the mountain and no strict adherence to 'separate spheres' ideology. For these men part of their enjoyment of the mountains came from sharing the experience with friends and family, irrespective of gender. Other male climbers such as Llewellyn Davies, one of the earliest AC members, may not have had female relatives who enjoyed climbing but were, nevertheless, supporters of improving women's rights and opportunities; Llewellyn's sister, was the campaigning suffragist Emily Davies, founder of Girton College, Cambridge.[87]

The relationship of male mountaineers with women, however, like the interpretations of manliness, was complex and highly variable. Some men who climbed with their wives or sisters, on other occasions climbed in all-male groups. By contrast, some would never consider being part of mixed sex groups, particularly if any serious expedition was contemplated. Leslie Stephen (1832-1904) was one of the latter. He is an example of someone who displayed a complex mix of attitudes to women. His stance is important because of the influence of his writing. Stephen also demonstrates the intricate gender relationships existing within much of the middle class at the time, proving the impossibility of assigning a simple commentary to gender relations.

2.2.Leslie Stephen.

From 1854 to 1863, Stephen was an ordained Cambridge don. He became a renowned Victorian literary intellectual, creator of the Dictionary of National Biography (DNB) as well as a major figure within Alpinism's 'Golden Age.' Stephen was influential within mountaineering both as a president of the AC and author of one of the most literary books on climbing, *The Playground of Europe* (1871). This was a collection of essays many of which had first been written for *Cornhill* or other periodicals.[88] It was widely read in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, and remains a classic amongst mountain literature.[89]

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[87] Matthew and Harrison 2006.
[88] William Thackeray, Stephen's father-in-law was editor of Cornhill. Stephen succeeded him in 1871.
[89] Five editions were printed between 1871 and 1907.

Following its publication 'playground' became a popular term for describing all manner of activities in the mountains, both physical and social.[90] Unlike many climbing narratives of the period the book was well written and provided insight, to climbers and non climbers alike, of the philosophy, culture and practicalities of mountaineering. Although it was clearly Stephen's personal view, it nevertheless resonated with many others. Geoffrey Winthrop Young (1876 -1958), a fellow climber and pioneer of outdoor education, claimed the 'mountaineering elect welcomed him wholeheartedly as their representative.'[91] Despite this unanimity Stephen's views on women's place and role in society did not always correspond with his fellow mountaineers.

Although, as will be discussed, Stephen was often unconventional, regularly criticising the dull uniformity and propriety of many aspects of modern life, his approach to women followed more traditional lines and was full of inconsistencies. An example of this concerns women's education. In 1877 in a letter to his future wife he declared that women should be 'as well educated as men.'[92] This was the view of the utilitarian philosopher J S Mill, who was a strong influence on Stephen and many of his generation.[93] Later Leslie's niece, Katherine Stephen (1856-1924), fulfilled his apparent belief when she became principal of Newnham College, Cambridge in 1911.[94] This was a remarkable achievement as Katherine's father, James Fitzjames Stephen, is renowned for the public disagreement he had with Mill's notions of liberty and the supposed inherent nature and abilities of men and women.[95] Nevertheless, despite Fitzjames upholding that men were superior and had 'greater intellectual force' than women, his daughter was not prevented from seeking both an education and employment.[96] This apparent contradiction seems like a family trait; Leslie Stephen, Fitzjames' brother, although initially supportive of educational opportunities for middle-class women, backtracked with his own children.

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90 Collie 1902, 4–5; Dent 1885, 262, 137; Edwards 1873, preface; Lunn 1914, 132, 246; Stephen 1907, xii.
91 Stephen 1904, x.
92 Quoted in Annan 1984, 119.
93 Maitland 1906, 105; Stephen 1907, xv,xx;
94 Annan 1984, 119. See DNB for further biographical detail
95 Richards 2011; Stephen 1878, 190–219.
96 Stephen 1878, 212.

Virginia Woolf, his youngest daughter, famously criticised him for denying her the same education as her brother.[97] In 1897 Stephen failed to vote in a Grace granting women full membership of Cambridge University, which makes the contrast with fellow climber Llewelyn Davies, whose sister Emily achieved so much for women's education, particularly stark.[98]

Correspondence and biographies make clear, however, that women were a crucial part of Stephen's life. In typical Victorian fashion, he relied on women to run the home and upon them he poured both his ire and his devotion.[99] These women could be forceful, ruling and in some instances over-ruling Stephen. On one occasion, for example, angry with his sister-in-law, Anne Thackeray, over 'some unexpected bills, Julia [Duckworth] spoke to me more to the purpose about my want of temper…and I took a turn with her in Kensington Gardens where I had the sense to confess my shortcomings and make promises of amendment.'[100] Stephen suffered bouts of mental instability and sudden anger much of his life. At these times women, rather than men, provided the buffer and support for him, both materially and emotionally. Following his first wife's death he confessed to his friend John Morley, 'I reproach myself at times for the bothers I gave her by occasional fits of ill-temper or nervous anxiety' despite having 'loved her as heartily as I know how to love.'[101]

Stephen needed women around him but always in the traditionally prescribed feminine roles as homemakers, carers and companions. Marriage, as an institution and as a source of stability, was important to him. He was less keen on women who challenged the political or social norm. The belief of his second wife, Julia Duckworth, that 'to serve [was] the fulfilment of woman's highest nature,' was probably an important attraction for him.[102] She was later to sign Octavia Hill's Appeal Against Female Suffrage. In 1887, Stephen met 'the wonderful Miss Schreiner' noting approvingly at first that 'she is a desperate free thinker.' A few

[97] Woolf 1979, 167.
[98] Annan 1984, 110.
[99] Annan 1984; Bicknell 1996; Maitland 1906.
[100] Stephen 1977, 432.
[101] Quoted in Maitland 1906, 256.
[102] Annan 1984, 120.

days later, however, learning that she 'disapproves of marriage and thinks that everybody should be free to drop everybody else', retorted 'I should drop her like a hot potato.'[103] As a free-thinker he could admire Miss Schreiner, but her free living he could not tolerate. His dislike of anything that smacked of women criticising the established order was writ large in a letter to his sister-in-law in which he remarked acidly, 'On the steamboat yesterday was Josephine Butler – sick I am glad to say.'[104] Butler was well known for leading the campaign against the Contagious Diseases (CD) Acts at the time.[105] This was a radical thing for a woman to do, as it involved not only speaking in public but also discussing the almost forbidden territory of sex and sexual behaviour. Stephen supported the Acts.[106]

Whilst he visited the Alps many times with both wives his marital status influenced the extent and nature of his mountaineering. Stephen wrote the article 'Regrets of a Mountaineer' rather prematurely in 1867; the same year he married his first wife Minny, Thackeray's youngest daughter.[107] 'I am effectually...debarred from mountaineering' he declared, coyly declining any clear explanation.[108] His new wife, however, was concerned for his safety and as a married man he felt the risks of climbing were irresponsible.[109] Despite despising the dull conventions of life, where gender was concerned, Stephen retained a very traditional view of what was appropriate for the different sexes.[110] Aware of his changed status, he remarked to an American friend that 'married men are not free agents.'[111] Frederic Maitland (1850-1906), historian, friend and Stephen's first biographer, describes this as the end of his 'first manner' of climbing.[112] In the sense that first ascents and more overtly dangerous expeditions were behind him, that is correct. He did however

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[103] Letters to Julia Stephen in Bicknell 1996, 344, 348.
[104] Letter to Anne Thackeray 17th January 1877 in Bicknell 1996, 183.
[105] For detail of the CD acts and the campaign against them see Summers 1999; Jordan and Sharp 2003.
[106] Bicknell 1996, fn 183.
[107] Stephen 1904, 344–384.
[108] Stephen 1904, 216.
[109] Stephen 1904, 243.
[110] Stephen 1904, 75.
[111] Letter to Oliver Wendell Holmes 25th March 1867 in Bicknell 1996, 46.
[112] Maitland 1906, 86.

continue to climb but in a more considered form, easier for a married man to justify.[113] Clearly he feared when he married he would have to stop climbing completely as others, such as David Abercrombie and Thomas Blandford, did.[114] This proved unnecessary but, nevertheless, the earlier, carefree, bachelor mode of climbing was at an end. This reaction reflects Stephen's traditional view of a married man's role and his sense that mountaineering, at a certain level, was for men alone. In this he clearly differed from people such as Wills, Spence-Watson and Edward Jackson who enjoyed and encouraged their wives' participation. For Stephen certain behaviours and activities were compartmentalised along traditional gendered lines; the endeavours, privations and companionship demanded in the high peaks were exclusively male. The importance and relevance for this thesis, is the wide variety of effects marriage had on men's relationship with mountaineering; there was no simple, unified reaction.

Prior to his wedding Stephen wrote that one of the benefits of the Alps was the opportunity it gave to 'turn with greater eagerness than ever from the increasing crowds of respectable human beings to savage rock and glacier, and the uncontaminated air of the High Alps.'[115] Despite relying upon and needing women's company at home his climbing in the high mountains was an interlude without them; women were some of the 'respectable human beings' he was distancing himself from. On one occasion his climbing companion, Dr Morgan, was excusing himself from accompanying Stephen on an expedition when 'a most unfortunate interruption occurred...A young lady...I had promised to convoy[sic] to the Zmutt glacier that afternoon, suddenly appeared to ask me some question...."I see what you prefer to coming with me over the mountains," barked Stephen. With a look of scorn he turned sharply... and I did not see him again till he met us at Vienna.'[116] Women had little part to play in the mountaineering aspect of Stephen's life, which for him was irredeemably male. Physical climbing, as opposed to lower level walks, was something he associated with solitude, male friends, muscular and physical effort and the privation, for

113 Stephen 1904, 153–177.
114 Mumm 1923, 1–4.
115 Stephen 1904, 54–55.
116 Letter quoted in Maitland 1906, 91–92.

example, of sleeping in snow-holes or caves en route to a first ascent.[117] It seems doubtful the all-male nature of his climbing was a *conscious* effort to parade his manliness – Stephen was merely behaving according to habit – but it supports John Tosh's assertion of the importance of homosocial activities to maintain and buttress middle-class men's male identity. [118]

This compartmentalising in Stephen's life of the differing gender roles, may account for little or no mention of female climbers in *The Playground of Europe*. It was not that Stephen did not encounter women – he shared the same guide as the leading woman mountaineer Lucy Walker (1836-1917) – but he chose to ignore them; they were transgressing into a world that, for him, they had no part in. On one occasion when he does recount meeting one of the foremost women climbers it has a nasty taint to it. In January 1888 he was in Grindelwald recovering from over work on the DNB. Margaret Jackson (1843-1906), a renowned alpinist, had just traversed the Jungfrau and Fischeraarhorn; the first time it had been achieved in winter. She and her guide suffered severe frostbite and were in danger of losing several fingers and toes. When Stephen heard, he felt profound sympathy for the guide but none for Jackson. He wrote to his wife 'I would much rather Mrs J should be the sufferer.' He was yet to meet Jackson but presumed her to be the 'queer dressed up little woman' he had seen in the lobby of his hotel. When they did eventually meet he patronisingly declared, 'she is not a bad little woman.' They only got as far as preliminary introductions whereupon he remarked, 'I hope I shall not have to get any further.'[119]

It is likely that Stephen was not only jealous of this woman who had just achieved another first ascent – something that was dear to his own heart as a younger man – but also irritated that a woman was successfully climbing the challenging terrain he always associated with male comradeship.[120] Unlike Stephen, Jackson was still capable in 1888 of ranging off into remote and

[117] Stephen 1902, III:269; Stephen 1904, 365; Tosh 1999, 6.
[118] O'Gorman 2000, 137. Tyndall equated the higher Alpine regions with 'male friendship' and 'the convivialities of homosociality.'
[119] Letters to Mrs Julia Stephen 19th & 22nd January 1888 in Bicknell 1996, 357–9.
[120] Stephen 1904, 83.

demanding areas, even in winter. As a result she wrote her name for posterity in the annals of mountaineering,[121] something Stephen had welcomed in his earlier climbing career.[122] He was unable, however, to congratulate or publicly appreciate her achievement. The neglect of women climbers, by the most prominent literary mountaineering talent in the nineteenth century, has arguably played a significant role in influencing subsequent narrators and historians of mountaineering, who have largely perpetuated the idea that mountains were an exclusive male space.[123]

2.3.Women introduce Men to the Alps.

Unlike Stephen, some men owed their introduction to mountaineering to women rather than to the all-male environment of the public school, university or AC. The explorer and erstwhile lawyer Douglas Freshfield (1845-1934) and Oxford don William Coolidge (1850-1926) are two notable examples. Freshfield's mother was the motivating force in the family's Alpine tours in the early 1860s and Coolidge was brought from America to the Alps by his aunt, Meta Brevoort (1825-1876), in 1865.[124] Such early experiences probably influenced these men's attitudes in later life to women and their place in society, as will be seen.

In 1869 Freshfield married Augusta Ritchie (Gussy) (1847-1911) a cousin of Leslie Stephen's first wife. Despite this family connection with Stephen, Freshfield's approach to women's status and their role in mountaineering and exploration could hardly have been more different. His choice of wife, in some respects, illustrates this.

Unlike Stephen's second wife, Gussy spoke of and supported the rights of women. She knew nothing of household management and found country life in England dull. She had lived in Paris for several years, was bilingual, well educated, used to the company of poets and artists and debating with friends the issues of the day. After spending time with Douglas' mother in London she complained that she was 'in the house of the Philistines.'[125] Gussy held strong

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121 Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 26,39,62,73,146.
122 Stephen 1904, 83.
123 Fleming 2000, 320; Ring 2000, 104.
124 Freshfield 1861; Freshfield 1862; Paillon 1899.
125 Fisher 2001, 104.

opinions and clearly felt superior to the Freshfields when it came to appreciating culture and the arts. She became a lifelong friend of George du Maurier and the violinist Joseph Joachim; she frequented the same social milieu as Tennyson and the photographer Mrs Cameron.[126]

Nevertheless, despite her preference for literature, politics and the arts, Douglas and Gussy met in the less cultured atmosphere of the mountains. It was after both had risen at 4.00am and were climbing to the Theodul pass (3301m) above Zermatt (1620m) that he proposed to her.[127] She was taken aback and initially refused him whereupon he looked 'more battered than after [climbing] the Shreckhorn.'[128] Eventually she relented but he was to remain more devoted to her, than she to him, for the rest of their lives. Where Stephen's wives were to some degree subservient and more concerned with domestic issues, Gussy was forthright, independent and keen for involvement with contemporary culture. Although Gussy did not have the close relationship with the mountains that Lucy and Bertha Wills had, she nevertheless enjoyed mountain scenery and accompanied Douglas on several Alpine trips, if not to any major summits. Her sister Eleanor, however, in the company of another woman climbed the Mittelhorn (3704m) with Douglas in 1879 and Gussy's daughter Katherine traversed Piz Corvatsch (3451m), Piz Margna (3158m) and Piz Palu (3901m) with her father in 1902.[129]

Freshfield's acceptance of women in areas that some, such as Stephen, felt were only for men was publicly demonstrated in 1893, but in a different context to mountaineering. As secretary of the RGS, Freshfield succeeded in getting ladies admitted as members.[130] Lord Curzon fiercely opposed this change and managed, through influence and coercion, to quickly overturn the decision.[131] Freshfield was furious; the society was prepared to prevent the 'eminent lady traveller Mrs

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126 Fisher 2001, 99.
127 Fisher 2001, 100. This event supports my argument, made later, that women who were not necessarily 'serious' mountaineers commonly undertook long days of walking and climbing often above the snow line.
128 Fisher 2001, 103.
129 Fisher 2001, 299–300.
130 "Royal Geographical Society."*The Times,* May 30 1893.
131 Curzon 1893; For a detailed study of this controversy see Bell and McEwan 1996.

Bishop (Miss Bird)' and the RGS's 'Gold Medallists, the late Mrs Somerville, Lady Franklin, Miss Edwards and Miss North' becoming members whilst conferring membership on many male members who, in contrast to these women, had contributed little to geographical understanding.[132] The RGS reinstated women in 1913, but Freshfield resigned over the issue and it was ten years before his relationship with the society was restored – he was awarded the Gold Medal for *Round Kanchenjunga* in 1903. His annoyance with the Society was its inconsistency – they would award women Gold Medals but not membership. A woman introduced Freshfield to mountain exploration; he knew gender was immaterial to making geographical discoveries, as the female Gold Medallists of the society attested to. Whilst Freshfield, unlike Wills, did not overtly encourage women by his writing to go into the hills, his actions with the RGS and his climbs with various women family members show his leanings. The choice of a wife like Gussy, who was self confident and unafraid to air her firm opinions, suggests he was at ease with a greater balance and collaboration between the differing genders.

2.4.Spirituality.

As noted in the previous chapter, for centuries people had associated the mountains with varying degrees of spiritual meaning; to some extent, this changeable relationship remained in the nineteenth century. The mountains often served either to reinforce belief in the divine, as for the hymn writer Frances Havergal, or to offer a replacement for a lost or non-existent faith.[133]Many AC members – more than 25% of the original membership – were clergymen. Stephen himself took holy orders whilst at Cambridge.

In 1875, he lost his belief, but his writing makes clear that climbing and the mountains offered solace and to some extent a replacement.[134] It is noticeable, for example, how he uses many of the same expressions in *The Playground of Europe* – centring on 'faith' and 'scepticism' - that he later employed in *An Agnostic's Apology.* The latter was an essay initially written for *Fortnightly*

132 Letter quoted in Fisher 2001, 180.
133 Crane 1881, 72–3.
134 Annan 1984, 70.

Review where he argued that a divine existence was unknowable and therefore unable to demand, or reward, a moral or virtuous life.[135] In contrast, when discussing the Alps, Stephen declared, 'The love of mountains is intimately connected with all that is noblest in human nature' – unlike God the mountains were a knowable, tangible presence with the ability to mould and influence the lives of those who came amongst them. The 'New School' of mountain travellers, he asserted, had 'the faith of true believers' which was 'not....a bigoted or exclusive creed'– something he suggested existed within Christianity.[136]

As for several others, both men and women, the mountains provided a spiritual focus that suggested the existence of forces greater than man, if not always of a creator.[137] This was true for Stephen and also the physicist and experienced mountaineer John Tyndall (1820-1893). Tyndall was a member of the AC and the X-club - a small group of men supporting theories of natural selection and the separation of science from religion.[138] In 1874, Tyndall gave the presidential speech at the annual conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Belfast.[139] In it he championed evolutionary processes and suggested religion should not interfere in areas of knowledge it knew little of; the speech received extensive publicity and as Bernard Lightman points out, antagonized most of Christendom in the process.[140] Despite his committed and confessed agnosticism, however, even he could not escape the use of religious language to describe his experiences in the mountains. When sitting on top of the Weisshorn - the first time it had been climbed – he tried to write some objective notes but declared, 'there was something incongruous, if not profane, in allowing the scientific faculty to interfere where silent worship seemed the 'reasonable service.'[141] If Tyndall, a renowned champion of rationality, struggled to express

135 Stephen 1893.
136 Stephen 1893, 7; Stephen 1904, 45, 75.
137 Five Ladies 2003; Schuster 1911; Spence Watson 1863, July 3rd; Spence Watson 1969.
138 Lightman 2010 discusses the important and unprecedented role science had in the lives of ordinary middle-class people.
139 Tyndall 1874.
140 "The Origin of Man,"*New York Times,* September 4, 1874; Capel, "Science for Roman Catholics" *The Times*, Sept 24, 1874; Lightman 2010, 32; "British Association for the Advancement of Science." *The Times*, August 20, 1874a. The latter was the start of several days coverage of the conference.
141 Tyndall 1871, 106.

himself without recourse to some form of spiritual language and imagery it is unsurprising others also failed.

Other men, however, unlike Tyndall and Stephen, had no desire to exclude the divine; for them it was a significant and meaningful part of their climbing experience. Mountaineer H. Schutz Wilson (1824-1902), for example, declared 'Oh my God: I thank thee that I live!' as he gazed from Mont Blanc's summit on 'a prospect so glorious that the mind is elevated to nearness to the Great Creator.' For Cecil Slingsby the mountains brought him closer to God and nurtured a deeper reverence.[142] A clergyman who accompanied Frances Havergal to the Grand Mulets went as far as trying to sing the Morning Hymn whilst half way up an ice wall.[143] Although, as O'Gorman has illustrated, men like Tyndall used mountaineering to exhibit a heroic 'muscular agnosticism' which formed a significant part of their male identity, there were many others – Alfred Wills for example – for whom the Alps had gentler connotations; the mountains were a balm to the soul and a reaffirmation of the Creator's existence.

2.5.Mental Space.

Most of the men who climbed had predominantly sedentary jobs in Britain. Like Carlyle's family, over one or two generations there had been a shift for many middle-class men from a physical, often rural, life to a more urban, constrained and intellectual existence. Men like Stephen, Wills and Tyndall - lawyers, scientist, editors - increasingly felt the stresses and pressures of work and modern life.

Journeys to the Alps from mid-century took place against a backdrop of social criticism, which had begun with Coleridge and continued with Carlyle, Arnold and Ruskin.[144] These men were concerned with the effect of the increased mechanisation of modern life, changes in modes of production, and the overall organisation and priorities of society. Stephen felt the growing industrialisation of life acutely. The increasing distance between people and nature, the growth of

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142 Readman 2014, 1121–1122.
143 Schutz Wilson 1878, 99–100.
144 Williams 1971.

mechanisation and industry, crowds, noise and polluted air, the rush of city life and lack of relationship to the wild were all issues that concerned him. The prospect of 'civilisation...spread[ing] to the top of Helvellyn' as proposed by Macaulay, and a dull uniformity overtaking landscape and peoples alike in the name of progress horrified Stephen.[145]It was with relief, therefore, that he could claim 'the Alps, as yet, remain', where man could drink water and breathe air that was free from 'the germs of indescribable diseases' and had not been through 'a million pairs of lungs.'[146] Mountains had a 'vigorous originality' and were the 'antithesis of convention and the commonplace'. By contrast he moaned, 'We all read the same newspapers, talk the same twaddle, are bound by the same laws of propriety, and are submitting to a uniform imposition of dull respectability.'

Climbing provided a temporary respite from the commonplace as well as the responsibilities and dependencies of life many men experienced at home. 'To the happy refugee from London worries', Stephen noted, [climbing] 'truly knits up the ravelled sleave [sic] of care.' There men could achieve 'the sleep of the mind which may be enjoyed with open eyes' and 'turn intellect out to play for a season.'[147] Tyndall similarly confessed, 'among [the mountains] I annually renew my lease of life, and restore the balance of mind and body which the purely intellectual discipline of London is calculated to destroy.'[148]

Alfred Wills, too, used his chalet in the Alps to recover from the mental stresses of work. A passage Stephen quoted from Senancour's novel *Obermann* (1804) accurately summarised what he felt was 'a sentiment more or less dimly present to the minds of all mountain-lovers.'[149]

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[145] Stephen 1904, 76.
[146] Stephen 1904, 77.
[147] Stephen 1902, III:108,261.
[148] Tyndall 1862, vi.
[149] Stephen 1904, 60.

> In the lowlands a natural man is corrupted by breathing the social atmosphere made turbid by the sound of the arts, by our noisy ostentatious pleasures, by our cries of hatred and moans of grief and anxiety.
> But here in these deserted mountains where the sky is so immense and the air so still, here where time moves so much more slowly and life seems more permanent, nature eloquently expresses the sense of some greater order, some more complete harmony and an eternal whole. Here man can rediscover his potential while feeling indestructible; he breathes unadulterated air far away from the pollution of others. His being belongs as much to the universe as to himself and he can live fully in total unity with it.[150]

This Rousseau-like passage encapsulates the entanglement of the old with the new, of pure nature and corrupted man. It eloquently described the emotional, cleansing and reviving qualities some men, as well as some women, associated with the mountains, drawing a stark contrast to the modern, industrialised cities most lived or worked in at home in Britain. For Stephen, Wills, Tyndall and probably many others, the Alps was where they went to recover from life at home; the mountains provided 'escape from ourselves and our neighbours.'[151]

Elaine Freedgood claims climbing provided men with an imagined heroism in the 'risky' mountain environment that contrasted starkly with the more mundane, sedentary lives most people safely led at home.[152] This may have some validity but there seems equally strong evidence that mountaineering provided psychological release and a calming restorative role. In the rugged terrain, many found comfort and healing – an important factor for someone, like Stephen, who constantly battled with his mental health.[153] Although Carlyle had attempted to lionise the work of the 'man-of-letters' and by association that of many professional men, this need for escape and respite could be said to expose a weakness rather than a strength. The need for the break afforded by mountaineering can be seen as the antithesis of the heroic male. It highlights

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150 Stephen 1904, 60 translated from French.
151 "In Memoriam; Alfred Wills." *AJ* 27 (1913): 47-54 ; Stephen 1904, 76.
152 Freedgood 2000, 110–111, 121.
153 There was a family history of mental ill health that began with his father, affected his brother and most famously the fatal depression of his daughter Virginia. Stephen exhibited milder symptoms of nervousness, anxiety & unreasonable anger for much of his life. For more details see Annan 1984, 135–137; Hill 1981; Maitland 1906, 301, 354, 434–4; Stephen 1977, 127.

vulnerability rather than omniscience; frailty rather than fortitude; the difficulty of coping with change and workload; it emphasised the need for rest – a demand more commonly associated with women. Importantly, it shows the struggle some men had to manage the demands and responsibilities of their working lives; upholding the virtues of 'manliness' clearly had its price.

3. Aesthetics, Exercise and Exploration

If *some* men needed the mental respite provided by climbing, *all* had to embrace the physicality and endurance inherent to mountaineering; the two were, and continue to be, mutually exclusive – it is impossible to climb without strenuous exertion. However, just as men's approach to women and the spirituality of the mountains differed so did their relationship to the muscular effort of climbing.

O'Gorman has previously highlighted the different ways Tyndall and Stephen wrote of their climbing.[154] Tyndall took pride in displaying his own excellent strength and fitness – especially if drawn against the weakness of others around him. He often emphasised the difficulty of an ascent, which he, nevertheless, triumphantly overcame, even taking over from guides on occasion.[155] Stephen, by contrast, rarely lingered on the difficulty of a climb; his account of climbing Mont Blanc, for example, which Tyndall also wrote of, describes more a casual saunter than a risky, strenuous mountain expedition. The physicality – which is clearly there – nevertheless is played down and subordinated to an embodied appreciation and relationship with the environment; a physical dialogue with the 'shattered seracs', 'the blue depths of crevasses', culminating with the summit view being like 'an opium dream'.[156] The amount of effort required in climbing is rarely mentioned even though Stephen was well known for his athletic ability. He famously walked fifty miles from Cambridge to London for an AC dinner and the times he recorded for some of his ascents were remarkably quick.[157]

Both men, however, despite different approaches achieved the same result of strengthening their male identity; Tyndall by openly writing of his strength and

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154 O'Gorman 2000, 135–137.
155 Tyndall 1860, 78–79.
156 Stephen 1904, 184–5.
157 Maitland 1906, 63.

Stephen by implying, consciously or not, that the exertion for him was insufficient to comment upon. Tyndall more obviously aligned himself with a heroic, muscular vision of the climber while Stephen's depiction was of a more aesthetic experience, albeit one only available to the physically fit. While Stephen did not stress the effort, and Tyndall rarely admitted any fatigue, other men, such as Wills and Spence-Watson, candidly admitted they succumbed, on occasions, to exhaustion.[158] They did not feel the same need to posit such a heroic stance – possibly because they both shared the mountains more fully with their wives.[159] Homosociability and the need to establish themselves in an all-male group did not hold the same attractions for them as for others.

Freshfield gives yet another perspective; he was dismissive of *any* inherent value of exercise declaring,

> My highest ambition has never been to spend my days in strenuous exercises to develop my muscles. No other mountaineering moment was instead more appreciated by me than that in which I could enjoy the landscape, while the others had to open a path.[160]

For him there was no heroism in muscular effort per se, it was just a means to an end and that purpose was exploration. For Freshfield exploration and geography were his motivation. Finding new areas, new routes, examining and understanding the geomorphology of mountain districts – this is what he became most renowned for, in the Alps, the Caucasus and eventually the Himalaya. He had an 'unrivalled ability for disentangling mountain topography.'[161]

Whereas for others the mountains were a balm for psychological stress and over work, for Freshfield they were his 'work' and focus; a large private income freed him from the necessity to earn a living. His mother had introduced him to independent exploration from an early age. She wrote,

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[158] Wills 1858, 80, 283.
[159] 1877, the year after Tyndall married, he & his wife, Louisa, climbed the Aletschhorn, they also built a chalet in the Alps. Tyndall was over 50 by this time & probably no longer felt the same need to parade his heroic strength.
[160] Fisher 2001, 25.
[161] Longstaff 1934, 261.

> I have often seen a long line of sheep following each other along a narrow track, when the whole mountainside was open before them......Most travellers acting on the same principle follow where others lead.[162]

As noted earlier, Jane Quentin Freshfield was not like the 'others'. She found Chamonix, Zermatt and the Bernese Oberland too crowded and 'sheeplike' for her tastes, with their ubiquitous 'visions of crinolines and knickerbockers', so she took the family to the lesser known Grisons and Italian Alps.[163] This set the seed for Douglas' lifelong interest in exploring less frequented mountainous regions. Freshfield's excursions in the mountains were not the robust displays of manliness that often accompanied Tyndall and Stephen's climbs. Again it seems plausible that having a family that explored the mountains, albeit to a lesser degree than Douglas eventually did, removed or at least diluted any polarised view of gendered space.

3.1. Imperialism, Conquest and Gender.

Exploration and being the first to the top was an important reason to climb for many mountaineers, both male and female; it wrote their name in the history books. Before attempting the Schreckhorn Stephen asked 'was there not some infinitesimal niche in history to be occupied by its successful assailant?' Wouldn't the 'first conqueror [of the mountain]… be carried down to posterity by clinging to its skirts'?[164]

Hansen has argued that Alpine 'climbing helped to legitimize…the wider imperial mission.' No longer just an 'abstraction', imperial endeavour, he claims, became 'readily accessible to any professional man who could travel to the Alps.'[165] It purportedly enabled 'men and women [to] participate vicariously in the conquest and expansion of Victorian imperial culture.'[166] Although 'conquering' previously unclimbed summits in a foreign country might sound convincing evidence of imperialist intentions, there is little in mountaineer's letters, diaries

162 Freshfield 1862, 3.
163 ibid
164 Stephen 1904, 84.
165 Hansen 1991, 154; Hansen 1995, 322;
166 Hansen 1991, 13; Hansen 1995, 322

or memoirs to *explicitly* support this. Nationalism and British prestige yes; but not imperialism with its sense of political or cultural dominance. In later work Hansen distances himself from the part played by imperialism in the Alps just as he also convincingly outlines its important role for ascents in Africa and the Himalayas – where national, imperial and cultural borders were more evidently contested than within Europe.[167] The 'scramble for the Alps,' had more connection with the Grand Tour than the subjugation of foreign lands - it was recreation not occupation. This is not to deny that some climbers linked patriotism with a first ascent but this applied to other nations too, the Italians on the Matterhorn and the French on Mont Blanc, for example; it also applied to women as well as men.[168]

Mountaineers, of course, were not unaffected by empire. Historian Catherine Hall has convincingly shown that for most British people, in this period, there was a constant awareness of the empire. However, in being such a relentless presence it was often taken for granted, only occasionally making significant impact on most people's lives as, for example, in events like the Indian mutiny, the Morant Bay rebellion or later the relief of Mafeking.[169] This awareness, even support of the empire, is different from the imperial intent and motivation suggested by Hansen. Mountaineers were undeniably keen on new exploration, to tread where none had been before and like Stephen, be remembered as the 'first ascentionist.' This is not the same as imperialism with its connotation of long-term dominance and possession.

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[167] Hansen 1996, 50-52, 66, highlights how climbing in the Caucasus enhanced the view that Britain was part of Europe and its peoples – an idea that is difficult to uphold with Britons simultaneously having imperialistic motives when climbing in the European Alps. Hansen 1997 contests the view that Tenzing represented 'the end of the era of unchallenged imperial adventures'; Hansen 2000 addresses, through the celebrations following the ascent of Everest, what, in a post colonial world, defined a citizen and of which country; Hansen 2013, 245-274. Other writers often use Hansen's early championing of imperialism when discussing motivations for Victorian alpinism as in this popular web site for climbers, www.summitpost.org/how-the-british-created-modern-mountaineering/713630

[168] Brown and De Beer 1957; Lunn 1957, 79; Moore 1939, 2:348; Paillon 1899; Whymper 1981. For the complex & shifting meaning of patriotism, which is beyond the remit of this work, see Samuel 1989; For a detailed consideration of nationalism see Anderson 2006.

[169] Hall and Rose 2006, 22–24; For more consideration of the impact of empire on nineteenth century culture see Hall 2002; Hall and McClelland 2010; Porter 2004; Thompson 2005.

Moreover, as historian Bradley Deane stresses, imperialism itself was not immutable. From 1870 to 1914 the nature of imperialism changed; it became more ruthlessly competitive and heroic as it vied with other empires. Imperialism took on the mantle of Disraeli's conservatism rather than Gladstone's liberalism.[170] By 1870, however, the first surge in alpine climbing had already ended, with most summits conquered. In other words, rampant, competitive imperialism, as typified by the infamous 'scramble for Africa,' developed *after* the arrival of serious mountaineering, making it an unlikely source of motivation.

Climbers were undoubtedly competitive in wanting to be the first to a summit and occasionally nationalistic in wanting to gain credit on behalf of their country. However, disputes in 2010 surrounding the first woman to complete all 8000-metre peaks, demonstrate this still occurs.[171] The Korean climber, Oh Eun-Sun, was shown live on television planting her national flag on the top of Annapurna (Figure 8). This had little to do with imperialism but everything to do with competition. Being the first to a summit was a lure in the nineteenth century and remains so for many today. The drive to individual victory and self-realisation may have been, as it often is now, a more potent force than imperialist motive.



Figure 8. Oh Eun-sun on summit of Annapurna, one of the fourteen 8000m summits.[172]

[170] Deane 2014, 1–18.
[171] See BBC coverage http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/8638718.stm and Reuters news agency http://in.reuters.com/article/2010/05/03/idINIndia-48188920100503. The claim of Oh Eun-Sun to be the 1st woman to climb all 14 peaks over 8000m in 2010 was later refuted, this accolade goes to Spaniard Edurne Pasaban. For more detail of the first women to climb these mountains with & without oxygen See Pasaban 2011, Kaltenbrunner 2014.
[172] http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/47732000/jpg/_47732277_jex_675496_de28-1.jpg

Hansen's most recent work, however, has shown how claiming a summit was not always confined merely to individual ambition; governments, for political reasons, sometimes appropriated their efforts. His detailed study unearths the tussle surrounding who was first to step onto the summit of Mont Blanc and extends to the political shenanigans around the first ascent of Everest.[173] The exploitation of the first ascent of the north face of the Eiger by the Nazis in 1938, to symbolise the vigour and strength of the German nation, is yet another example of how mountaineering has been appropriated for political causes.[174] The point is nineteenth-century climbers were proud, often arrogantly so, of being British but climbing for them was not an overtly political or imperialistic act.[175] Most men were like Alfred Wills who, although credited with triggering a male-dominated and competitive race for unclimbed peaks, never actually achieved a first ascent himself. He had a broader, more holistic approach to the mountains, one that included exercise and exploration but also family, friends and the flora and fauna of the Alps.[176]

Although, as will be seen in chapter four, women as well as men enjoyed being the first to a summit there is no denying that the language of exploration polarised around gender and made extensive use of sexual metaphor. Land and nature had been identified as female for centuries, they symbolised wild fertility, untamed beauty – ripe for men to subdue, dominate and harvest.[177] Travelogues by men are peppered with expressions such as virgin territory, penetration, conquest and husbanding.[178]

> Our mountain, like a beautiful coquette, sometimes unveiled herself for a moment and looked charming above, although very mysterious below. It was not until eventide she allowed us to approach her: then as darkness came on, the curtains were withdrawn, the light drapery was lifted and we stole upon tiptoe through the grand portal framed by Mont Suc.[179]

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173 Hansen 2013a.
174 Fuchs 2012.
175 Readman 2014 stresses that Cecil Slingsby, although a strong supporter of empire, did not climb with imperialistic motives.
176 "In Memoriam; Alfred Wills." *AJ* 27 (1913): 47-54.
177 Jordanova 1989, 22–42; McDowell 1999, 44–47.
178 Bassnett 2002, 231.
179 Whymper 1981, 99–100.

This description by Whymper of an easy ascent in the Mont Blanc massif is typical of the genre. It ably demonstrates the sexual imagery, associations and sense of machismo that not only exaggerates the task at hand but also stresses the need for male persistence to overcome the diffidence and temptation of the harlot-like mountain. Here is male power laced with undisguised enjoyment. This clearly highlights how some men fantasised about 'conquests' - mountains or otherwise. How much this should be applied to all male climbers, though, is a difficult question to answer. The language of exploration was undoubtedly sexualised but was so commonplace that many men probably used the terms unthinkingly. Furthermore male travel narratives were usually given greater credibility than women's, particularly when surveying, measuring and technical observations were viewed as key elements.[180] Such activities hinted at ownership and domination and did little to deter the use of sexualised language.

The gendered metaphor of conquering virgin territory clearly strengthened the image of a muscular, heroic, male adventurer – something many men might aspire to, or fantasise over. Escapist adventure stories were very popular, possibly because they provided the foil to the routine and unchallenging nature of many people's lives.[181] Myth or not the sexual metaphor helped to reinforce the almost unconscious notion that more remote areas of the mountains, and the highest or more difficult peaks, were exclusively a male preserve. It strengthened the link between men and mountains. The sexualised language of exploration clearly presented additional difficulties for women to overcome if they chose to write of their own expeditions, as will be discussed in chapter 6.

3.2 Aesthetics.

Men saw mountains not just as objects to physically conquer but also from more intellectual and psychological viewpoints.[182] This way of experiencing the mountains could be viewed as marrying together the multiple types of

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180 Driver 2001, 55–67.
181 Francis 2002, 643.
182 Tebbutt 2006 discusses how remote hills afforded to opportunity for reflection and thought as well as adventure.

‘manliness’ discussed by Adams – the joining of Carlyle’s ‘hero as a man of letters’ with both Walter Pater’s secular, and Charles Kingsley’s religious, muscular aestheticism.[183] Leslie Stephen is arguably the individual who most typifies this mixture, even to the extent of being both an ordained priest and later an ardent agnostic, as well as being at the heart of literary London. He combined physicality with aesthetic appreciation and although his writing is clearly his own opinion, it nevertheless influenced and was representative of several others.[184] As Young claimed, Stephen was the mountaineer’s envoy.[185] His relationship with mountains centred on being intimately immersed amongst them and by physically pitching himself against all they offered.

Stephen was adamant that only by climbing could mountains be properly appreciated - their character, ambience and aesthetic properties be fully discerned.[186] Mountains were to be measured not in so many feet or metres but in hours of muscular effort. His was an aesthetic born out of physical contact with rock and ice, privation, endurance, cold and exhaustion. It was kinaesthetic and intimately connected to each person’s physical and psychological abilities. From being immersed in the mountains and the physical process of climbing, Stephen felt the mountaineer became more informed about himself, the environment and ‘the close and intimate’ relationship of these two entities. The mountains were ‘part of the great machinery in which my physical frame is inextricably involved, and not the less interesting because [it is] a part which I am unable to subdue to my purposes,’ he wrote. Mountains ‘speak to man of his littleness and his ephemeral existence.’[187]

Men’s aesthetic appreciation of the mountains, however, was no monolith. Stephen’s views may have been popular with many, especially those who battled with the highest summits, but they were not unchallenged. Stephen’s intimate, immersed connection with the landscape that were enshrined in his physical

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183 Eli Adams 1995.
184 Dent 1885, 317; Lunn 1914, 246; Mathews 1898, 223.
185 Stephen 1904, x.
186 Stephen 1904, 225–226, 358–361.
187 Stephen 1904, 296–7.

endeavours to get to the top contrasted with the view of art critic John Ruskin, who felt mountains were better appreciated from a distance. For Ruskin, mountains were 'natural cathedrals', 'choirs of stream and stone, altars of snow and vaults of purple' and as such should be gazed at with awe. They were for reverence and study, not gymnastics nor to assuage the egos of man.[188] Distance gave perspective, colour, a sense of travel and the full appreciation of grandeur. For Ruskin, the visual took precedent over the physical.[189] He accused climbers of being more interested in reaching the summit than appreciating the qualities of the mountain. Stephen denied this claiming, on the contrary, that mountaineers had a unique relationship with the hills born of being ***in*** the environment rather than merely observing from afar. They had truly tasted the flavour of the mountains and delved into their character. They had experienced, rather than merely viewed, the sudden storm, avalanche or rock fall; they had felt the thawing of frozen fingers and toes as the sunrise slowly warmed the morning air. Theirs was an experience born, not of sight and perspective, but of hard physical effort and privation.

Ruskin is well known for his passage attacking climbers who treated the Alps, 'like soaped-poles in a bear garden which [they] set [them]selves to climb and then slide down again with shrieks of delight.'[190] He was himself a member of the AC, however, and this excerpt is only a small part of a larger argument against the expansion of roads, tunnels, railways, industrialisation and modern life into the beauty and wildness of the natural world, which he viewed as desecration. In this respect he and Stephen were united. Both men viewed the mountains as sanctuaries; for Ruskin they were the 'beginning and end of all natural scenery' in which his 'affections [were] wholly bound up.'[191] Here were treasures for thinkers, scholars, workers and worshippers alike but man's interventions, including the development of tourism, threatened this natural schoolroom.[192] For both men, as for others, the surge in popularity of the Alps with the *perception* of

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188 Ruskin 1897, 4:371–2, 399.
189 For an excellent appraisal of the two different philosophical stances see Colley 2009; Morrison 2009.
190 Ruskin 1865, 68–69.
191 Ruskin 1897, 4:365.
192 Ruskin 1897, 4:371.

an alarming increase in 'tourists,' as opposed to respectable 'travellers' like themselves, threatened to violate the natural world they came to enjoy. [193] Stephen 'studied with a philosophic eye the nature of that offensive variety of the genus of primates, the common tourist,' who travelled quickly, had 'a rooted aversion to mountain scenery' and were 'doomed to see a number of objects' ticking them off their list but never really understanding their significance.[194]

Although as discussed earlier there was a perceived social difference between 'travellers' and 'tourists', the sheer numbers of the latter also threatened the magic, the quiet and other worldliness Stephen, Ruskin and many other climbers, both men and women, associated with the mountains.[195] Their views reflected an elitism, which was not directed necessarily at the lower social classes, who would have had difficulty affording such trips, but more at other members of the middle class such as 'that variety of English clergyman which ..... forces church services upon you by violence in remote country inns.'[196] In one way this desire to keep the mountains only for those with the 'right' aesthetic taste is similar to the desire some had to exclude women from the high peaks. It preserved the mountain space for those from the same social order or with comparable interests, that strengthened the idea, even if subliminally, of its exclusivity.

4. Summary

The different ways men enjoyed and experienced the mountains mirror the multiple and varied nature of manliness in the second half of the nineteenth century. The two phenomena can be seen as responding to the many changes occurring within society. Although men held most positions of power, the middle- class were striving to carve out a 'manly' status in a world where the old physical roles of their forebears had largely disappeared, as witnessed by Carlyle's attempt to lionise 'the hero as a man of letters.'

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193 Buzard 1993, 2. This provides a comprehensive analysis of the differences perceived between tourists and travellers.
194 Stephen 1904, 152–3.
195 Conway 1900, 118–119; Edwards 1873, 2.
196 Dent 1885, 146–7; Stephen 1904, 195.

Several historians have traced the way men rediscovered or reformulated, their 'manly' identity in line with changes in their working and social lives.[197] Gendered difference only makes sense when seen in contrast to its purported opposite. The necessity to lay down clear gender markers was given added impetus by the slow, gradual, but growing and very distinct public activity of certain groups of people on behalf of women. Although this will be dealt with in detail in the following chapter I specifically want to highlight here the Langham Place group, Mill's attempt for women to be included in the 1867 reform act, the lobbying for greater female access to education, the involvement of more women in local politics plus protests against the CD acts; all of these created a sensation that women were beginning to assert themselves on the public stage – a space which had predominantly been a male domain. A developing, even if limited, confidence by certain groups of women could be seen as promoting a reaction by a male society keen to maintain its hegemony.

The vision of manliness as one of self-discipline and control, independent and responsible, was raised to a heroic level in the Alps. In this environment male mountaineers were often portrayed as vanquishing against the odds, displaying patriotism, fortitude, courage and endurance in the face of perilous precipices or immense icefalls. This exaggerated depiction, however, was largely imaginary; it played to what many hoped for – a fantasy for either themselves or their sons. Most men who went to the Alps were not AC members, and of those that were many did not attempt pioneering or difficult climbs. Those who did choose to climb the highest summits were united only in their love of the mountains; they had widely differing views on women's role, the spiritual and aesthetic experience of the mountains and their love or disdain of exercise and exploration. Rather than being heroically omniscient with unlimited powers of physical and mental endurance, several mountaineers needed the rest and respite afforded by the mountains - needs that were almost the antithesis of the valiant, carefree adventurer.

The popularity and encouragement of mountaineering for young upper middle-class men, however, was one way of affirming maturity; it continued many of the

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197 Hall 1992a; Mangan and Walvin 1987; Tosh 2007; Tosh 2005.

experiences of school – a homosocial environment, basic accommodation and physical exertion but this time laced with independence and the potential for adventure. By going to the 'right' places the young men could be seen as travellers rather than tourists. Hansen wrote that mountaineering was a way middle-class men 'defined a distinctive identity for themselves'.[198] This is a rather simplistic view; there was no one, male, mountaineering identity, no simple definition. Manliness had many representations and the men who climbed several identities. Whereas climbing, in the sense that it was an interest, contributed to who the men were, it did so in different ways for each individual. This is clearly seen in the lives of Freshfield as opposed to Stephen, Tyndall in contrast to Wills.

Mountains may have been an aspirational masculine place in the nineteenth century but in reality they exhibited greater gender diversity. Importantly some climbers were women. For them, a singular male identity allied to mountaineering would clearly have proved problematic. Arguably, it was the existence of a variety of male identities that created the space for women to exploit. It is to how such women developed into mountaineers and the back ground against which this occurred that I now turn.

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[198] Hansen 1991, 2.

Chapter 3. 'No Worse for the Long Walk'.[1]

How Women Became Mountaineers

The previous chapter demonstrated that several men welcomed and encouraged women to walk, climb and explore the high Alps. Nevertheless, Victorian society expected middle-class women, overall, to lead more circumscribed and protected lives than men. In order to understand how some women operated outside, or on the fringes, of these social constraints the first part of this chapter considers, briefly, the wider social and political position of most middle-class women in this period, including the view of women by science and medicine. The second half analyses the family back ground of women climbers before considering, through the use of two case studies, the important subject of how exactly most women began climbing. The heterogeneity of female climbers and the relationship of their activities to theories of gender conclude the chapter.

1.Middle-Class Women and Society

From 1850 to1900 there was, of course, significant social change with increasing urbanisation and industrialisation. Wealth resulting from Britain's dominant world position, with the development and expansion of new businesses and trade routes, helped enlarge the upper middle class.[2] This wealth, for example, allowed gentleman scientists such as Darwin the luxury of time for travel and independent research. It also financed long summer explorations of the Alps – four to eight weeks were common. Importantly this growing prosperity gave some women an economic autonomy that provided freedom to go where they chose.

1.1 Politics and Culture.

The majority of middle-class women, however, were unable to have as much independence as men. As has been well documented, women were restricted in their educational opportunities, their ability to join the professions or own

[1] Five Ladies, 2003, 40.
[2] Gunn 2000; Hall 1992b; Kidd and Nicholls 1999; Morris 1990.

property and control their finances. [3] Suffrage, of course remained far off.[4] Encouraged to view their destiny as marriage, women's role was to be the helpmate of their husbands, to have children, be the moral guardian and run the home.[5]

The legal, educational and political situation of women, however, represents their institutional position within society and tells little of how this translated into the reality of women's lives. This 'official' view tends to portray an overly simplistic and largely negative picture of oppressed women and oppressive men. Moreover, it often depicts a slow linear progression from the initial stirrings of 'feminism' surrounding the Langham Place women in the 1850s to the suffragette activity of the early twentieth century.[6] In reality, change concerning women's role was more undulating, hesitant and divided; there was disagreement amongst both women and men concerning female nature, aptitude and place in society.

The 'woman question' was a topic of heated debate in several periodicals, which, of itself, points both to the fact that women were not always fulfilling the submissive, domestic role assigned to them and to the wider anxiety this caused. W R Greg's 1862 essay 'Why are Women Redundant', for example, suggested sending the growing number of single, independent women to the colonies to marry the alleged numerous British men that awaited them there. This article triggered firm rebuttal from, amongst others, mountaineer Mary Taylor.[7] Recently, historians have shown how a number of women were far from passive

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[3] For detail of this very large subject see Davidoff 1987; Gleadle 2001; Gorham 1982; Hall 2000; Langland 1992; Levine 1990; Moore 1985; Rendall 1999; Schwartz 2013Vicinus 1972; Vickery 1993;Yeo 1998.
[4] Hall 2000; Hammerton 1992, ch3–4; Purvis 1981.
[5] For the role of Evangelical influence on the development of women's moral domestic position see Hall 1992b, 75–93.
[6] For more information on the Langham Place group see Lacey 1987; for a wider discussion on the difficulty of using the term feminism see Delap 2011. Importantly 'feminism' became associated with women's rights only in the late 1890s. Until then it related to the 'qualities of females' (see OED 1841). Feminism's first recorded use as a noun is 1887.Women who worked for greater female equality until the 1880s would not have recognised the word's meaning; the expression 'woman question' was more familiar.
[7] Greg, "Why are Women Redundant?" *National Review*, 28, (1862): 434-460; Taylor 1870, 25–48; Boucherett 1869.

in the face of a male-dominated society.[8] Women's ability to subvert, manipulate and influence a wide range of subjects - politics, work, art, literature, community and the family – shows the existence of a diversity of actions and reactions. Generalisations or simple gender dichotomies clearly, therefore, have little validity. Nevertheless, the contrasting views of philosopher John Stuart Mill and critic John Ruskin provide a useful nexus to consider the ferment of discussion and action that took place concerning women's place in society. Importantly, for this thesis, such widespread comment and activity provided fertile ground for the development of women's mountaineering.

1.2. The 'Woman Question.'

As commonly noted Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* (1865) and Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869) represented two opposing philosophies concerning the role and nature of women.[9] Ruskin maintained the sexes were complementary; each having their own particular qualities and 'are in nothing alike.' Women were to selflessly create and tend the home, maintaining it as a morally pure and virtuous haven for men returning from 'rough work in the open world.' Although allegedly neither sex was superior, women's education should enable her 'to sympathise in her husband's pleasures, and those of his friends.' Ruskin never mentions a woman being free to choose her own reading, or indulge her own 'pleasures.' Indeed he urged 'the modern magazine and novel' be kept away from girls.[10]

Sesame and Lilies was popular; a second edition was published within two years and 185,000 copies were sold by 1908.[11] Ruskin's ideas clearly resonated with some people. Despite his philosophy's inherent gender inequality many women supported him; they formed the major part of his lecture audiences.[12] There has been vociferous debate concerning Ruskin's view of women. Birch, for example, opposes the view of feminist historian Millett, maintaining that Ruskin encouraged some female poets and artists and often related better to women

8 Delap 2011; Fraser 2014; Gleadle 2001; Morgan 2007; Schwartz 2013; Thompson 1999a.
9 Cordea 2013; Epstein 1988; Millett 1970.
10 Ruskin 1865, 87–88, 95–98.
11 Connor 1979, 141; Helsinger 1983, 96.
12 Cook and Wedderburn 1903, 3–29.

than men. These arguments show up the complexity surrounding the position of women, but do little to shift Ruskin closer to the more liberal view of Mill.[13]

Mill felt 'the chief hindrance to human improvement' was not so much industrialisation as the inequality of the sexes. Unlike Ruskin, he advocated giving women complete equality and freedom with the compelling argument, 'What women by nature cannot do, it is quite superfluous to forbid them from doing. What they can do but not so well as the men … competition suffices to exclude them from.'[14] Women's subordination to men, he argued, had little to do with inherent nature and much to do with custom, which over time had become formalised into law.[15] The imposition of artificial restrictions on women, he claimed made it impossible to know their true abilities. Only by allowing women freedom to choose and experience all life had to offer – education, business, the professions or political activity – would their real nature become apparent.

Like Ruskin, Mill had many supporters, both male and female. His book, for example, coincided with the publication of Josephine Butler's *Woman's Work and Woman's Culture* (1869). Written by ten different people, the essays concerned many of the same issues raised by Mill. Butler stresses, however, there was no plagiarism; each was ignorant of the other's forthcoming work.[16] Evidently Mill was not a lone voice; his ideas were already in broad circulation and reflected a wider general mood, in some quarters, for change.

The last fifty years of the nineteenth century was a time of unprecedented activity on behalf of women. Jessie Boucherett, Francis Power Cobbe and Barbara Bodichon were just some of those campaigning for a variety of women's rights.[17] However, they did not always agree with each other. Butler, a devout Christian, is renown for leading the campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts in 1869. She did this with, and at the suggestion of, the atheist Elizabeth Wolstenholme

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[13] Birch 1988; Millett 1970.
[14] Mill 2008, 499. First published 1869.
[15] Mill 2008, 493, 475.
[16] Butler 1869, viii.
[17] Butler 1869, 290–330.

Elmy.[18] Their opposing beliefs, which normally might have kept them apart, were set aside to fight for this common cause. Emily Davies pushed for better female education, as did Mary Ward; the former, however, actively supported women's suffrage while the latter opposed it.[19] A study of female writers underlines the multifarious, often ambivalent, and frequently complex nature of women's opinions. Some women might support the married woman's property bill or entrance to university but refrain from endorsing suffrage.[20]

There was often considerable friction between opposing viewpoints. Ruskin, for example, told one of his devoted supporters he was wasting his time, after she confessed to reading and enjoying Mill's work.[21] Sarah Stickney Ellis and Eliza Lynn Linton are commonly cited examples of those who supported women's subordinate, domestic position.[22] Ironically, these two women encapsulate the complexity; while they actively endorsed women's traditional place in the private sphere of home, their own lives enacted the opposite. They were independent, professional writers and commentators active within a very public discourse concerning the 'woman question.'

The important point is that the society and class women mountaineers emerged from was witnessing a boiling over of these differing views; within this social strata a group of people evolved who perceived they no longer needed, or should, maintain the status quo. The polarised views of Ruskin and Mill are emblematic of a sense that women's place in society was less stable, more elusive and debatable than previously imagined. This was a situation that created space for some women, such as female mountaineers, consciously or unconsciously, to push the boundaries yet further.

1.3. Poetry & Etiquette.

Some poetry mirrored these different opinions. In 1862, Coventry Patmore published the completed version of *The Angel in the House*. As is well

[18] Schwartz 2013 has a detailed study of the cooperation between women of different beliefs.
[19] Sutton- Ramspeck 1999, 206.
[20] Thompson 1999a, 3; for a detailed study of those opposing suffrage see Bush 2007.
[21] Lloyd 1995, 341.
[22] Stickney Ellis 1840.

documented, this narrative poem became a clichéd vision of Victorian middle-class womanhood; the wife selflessly devoted to her children and submissive to her husband.[23] As a result, it has become a common reference point for argument in the historiography of Victorian gender relations.[24] The image was persistent even beyond this period; Virginia Woolf addressing the Women's Service League in 1931 highlighted how essential it was to kill 'the Angel in the House' if women were to become individuals in their own right.[25]

In contrast to Patmore, George Meredith in 1860 published *Modern Love.* Depicting a loveless marriage which maintained the outward appearance that nothing was wrong, it flew against the household gods upheld by Patmore and Ruskin – the submissive, pure, female guardian of domestic bliss. Meredith, however, unlike Mill was no prototype feminist; he apportioned more blame on his wife than himself, asking that women be given 'more brain, Oh Lord, more brain.'[26] Nevertheless, the stark contrast between Meredith and Patmore highlights, again, the wide variety of views about women's relationship with men and domesticity. The opposing binaries that pervade many aspects of gender are shown to be loose and muddy.[27]

Accepted codes of behaviour and etiquette, which provided the outward appearance of Victorian middle-class life, could act as a buffer, a veneer, between the inner private world of the individual and the outer public presentation. Poets such as Browning along with Clough, Tennyson and Arnold explored this apparent disjunction.[28] The *Fortnightly Review,* for example, identified Browning as someone, 'more than anyone else, who makes us realise the volcano of dangerous forces which simmers beneath the smiling commonplaces of ordinary life.'[29] This disparity, between what people felt and how they were portrayed or acted, is particularly relevant when considering women mountaineers. As will be

[23] Moore 1985; Morgan 2007; Rendall 1999; Vicinus 1972.
[24] Gay 1986, 2:291–297 suggests there was an underlying eroticism to the poem.
[25] Woolf 2013.
[26] Meredith 1906, 50.
[27] For discussion of the existence of binaries in gender see Jordanova 1993.
[28] St George 1993, 241–256.
[29] Courtney 1883, 889.

seen, there was a significant difference between what the public perceived, or was made aware of, and what happened in practice. It allowed climbers to present one public face whilst enacting the opposite in more private locations.

The manners and etiquette of Victorian society gave Browning's 'commonplaces of ordinary life' tangible form. Social expectations of behaviour, according to Mill, depended 'too much [on] faith in custom and the general feeling'; they were an almost instinctive and therefore unthinking, way of behaving.[30] Mill pre-empts, in some sense, Judith Butler's twentieth-century theory of performativity according to which, gender identities are created by the reiteration of social norms. Historian Andrew St George claims etiquette, which by definition embodies such performativity, allowed society to develop a framework of safety and order, providing clear recognisable rules, boundaries and established protocols that were readily associated with a particular social class or group. Echoing both Foucault and Bourdieu he maintains it was a form of both self-control and class control – part of the Victorian middle-class's essential 'habitus'.[31] Establishing accepted forms of behaviour was a way of controlling individualism, making those who did not conform more obvious, even allowing them, as Mill noted, to be seen as behaving against their 'nature' and so open to criticism.[32] As will be shown, women climbers had to negotiate this tricky position of remaining 'acceptable' whilst simultaneously indulging in activities that contradicted perceived social norms.

Whilst codes of social behaviour touched both genders, women were more constrained by them. Samuel Smiles' popular book *Self-help* (1859) preached an outgoing, positive independence of 'self-culture and self-control' aimed primarily at men.[33] A manual for self-advancement, it extolled disciplined perseverance, energy and courage. While *Self-help* looked to the future, etiquette books sought to maintain the status quo. These, although containing some advice for men, concentrated on the restrictive minutiae of social and domestic niceties that

[30] Mill 2008, 473.
[31] For more detail about Bourdieu's idea of habitus see Bourdieu 1977; Fowler 2000; St George 1993, xiv.
[32] Mill 2008, 484.
[33] Smiles 1908, vi.

were largely women's domain. They addressed everything concerned with presentation, from how to walk, what to wear, suitable topics of conversation, how and when to visit people and what cards to leave, to the type of food to serve to whom. In cloying detail, no social enactment or contact was left untouched; all had associated codes and rules. Ignoring them risked social condemnation.[34] Lady Campbell's etiquette guide summed up a common view of women's 'proper' behaviour,

> A true lady… will be courteous to all around her, modest but not awkwardly bashful; brave, without being in the slightest degree bold or masculine… in fact, she will not only try "to make *men* happy and to keep them so," but every living creature around her.[35]

2. Medicine, Science and Women

Medical literature often aligned itself with poetry, self-help texts and political commentaries in reinforcing women's subordinate social and cultural position. The use of allegedly scientific evidence to provide credence to a biologically determined view of women is well documented.[36]

From the 1850s *The Lancet* and *British Medical Journal* (*BMJ),* were sites of an active discourse about the purported relationship of female physiology to women's functional ability. Articles, letters and conference proceedings concerning women's suitability for various roles and activities were regular features.[37] In response to Mill's attempt to extend the franchise in 1867, for example, a leader in *The Lancet* maintained women were,

> not physically or mentally fitted for it... their organisation shows a comparative delicacy; the conformation of structures and organs is less developed. There is less strength and vigour and less fitness.

The writer linked women's inherent anatomical and physiological weakness with their supposed natural 'love' of the home and home duties. Echoing Ruskin, he added, they 'devote themselves with real enjoyment to its pleasurable cares and

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[34] Ballin 1885; Campbell 1898; St George 1993, 104–5; Warne 1871.
[35] Campbell 1898, 18–19.
[36] Moscucci 1990; Poovey 1987; Porter 1999; Smith-Rosenberg and Rosenberg 1973; Showalter 1987; Showalter and Showalter 1972.
[37] Hicks 1877; Tait 1874; Tilt , "Education of Girls," *BMJ* 1(1887): 751; "Exercise for Girls," *BMJ*, 1(1884): 574; "General Council of Medical Education & Registration. Session 1875." *BMJ,* 2, (1875): 9-25.

absorbing interests'; apparently they neither cared for, nor needed, the greater power and representation that went with enfranchisement.[38]

2.1 Women's innate role.

Efforts to delineate these different gender roles, within both medicine and elsewhere, used ideas from contemporary evolutionary theories. In 1875, for example, surgeon Mr Turner, declared woman's 'muscular apparatus is less powerful, her bones more slender, her skull… exhibits a smaller departure from the infantile condition than is to be found in a man.'[39] Using ideas of recapitulation, he suggested women remained in a more primitive state of development than men. This prevented them reaching the same intellectual or physical ability and consequently inhibited entry to similar spheres of activity. It is important to recall that Lamarckism had as many adherents as Darwinism at this time.[40] This belief, that acquired characteristics could be transmitted to subsequent generations, might be seen as another reason to delimit women's activities and behaviours. Should women develop 'manly' attributes of learning, assertiveness and physical strength these might be passed to future generations, which could affect the nature and order of society itself.

Exclusion from many of the tasks and opportunities available to men led ineluctably to woman's purportedly natural role as mother, wife and 'helpmeet to men'.[41] In these discussions, marriage and producing children were automatically assumed as woman's natural destiny and desire. According to some doctors, however, this calling only led to further incapacity. Several within medicine shared the view of J M Allan of the Anthropological Society,

> No woman ever passed through life without being ill. She suffers from 'the custom of women' or she does not. In either case she is normally or abnormally ill. Thus every woman is, according to temperament and other circumstances, always more or less an invalid. Therefore, no woman can pursue uninterrupted physical or mental labour. Nature disables the whole sex, single as well as married, from competing on equal terms with men.[42]

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[38] "The Proposition to Enfranchise Women," *Lancet*, March 1867: 401.
[39] "General Council of Medical Education & Registration. Session 1875." *BMJ,* 2, (1875):10.
[40] Fichman 1997, 96–97.
[41] "General Council of Medical Education & Registration. Session 1875." *BMJ,* 2, (1875):10.
[42] Allan 1869.

This view was based on the notion the body contained a finite amount of energy; if used for one purpose it was unavailable elsewhere. Many claims and counter-claims surrounding women's health and abilities built upon the idea that menstruation put a monthly drain on women's energy reserves; an apparently scientific premise that conveniently supported the existing social hierarchy of male dominance. Menstruation was a convenient issue around which to construct women as 'other;' someone distinct from the 'normal' male model.[43]

Many doctors advised women to rest during their periods, often in bed, for anything from two days to more than a week.[44] Physician Dr Wade, in 1872 advocated rest should begin two days prior to the onset of a woman's period; this was still recommended at the end of the century for a variety of ailments associated with menstruation.[45] Exposure to either too much education or strenuous exercise risked depleting the body's energy to the extent that the system might never recover. This clearly has relevance for women climbers, who regularly expended large amounts of energy during their six to eight week tours.

The public exchange over women's engagement with higher education between physicians Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Henry Maudsley has featured extensively in historical studies of gender, particularly in the work of Katharina Rowold.[46] Prompted by the publication of Harvard professor Dr Edward Clarke's book *Sex in Education* (1874) it concerned the claim that higher education damaged women's health.[47] These fears affected not just women's ability to be educated but also to engage with strenuous exercise - clearly something that concerns women's physical activity in the Alps.

[43] Strange 2000.
[44] Tilt 1887; Hardaker, "Science and the Woman Question," *Popular Science Monthly*, 20, March 1882, 521; For studies of the concerns surrounding menstruation see; Shail and Howie 2005; Showalter and Showalter 1970; Strange 2000; Vertinsky 1990
[45] Allbutt 1905; Jones 1897; Wade, "Clinical Lecture on the Relation Between Menstruation and the Chlorosis of Young Women," *BMJ*, 2, (1872): 35-37.
[46] Garrett Anderson, "Sex in Mind & Education: A Reply," *Fortnightly Review*, 15 (1874): 582-594; Maudsley, "Sex in Mind & Education," *Fortnightly Review*,15 (1874):466-484; McCrone 1988a; Rowold 1996; Showalter and Showalter 1972.
[47] Clarke 1874.

2.2. Exercise.

Exercise and education could be interpreted as sides of the same coin, as they both, allegedly, drained women of their finite energy reserves. However, many Victorian doctors expressed attitudes to exercise that were more ambiguous than those regarding education. Whilst doctors blamed excessive study for producing enervated, pallid and nervous females, exercise, within limits, was positively encouraged.[48] Portrayed as an antidote to too much schoolwork, certain activities outdoors or in the gymnasium were encouraged, as they took girls away from immersion in their books. Moderate exercise aided the production of fit and healthy young women who, crucially, would eventually become productive mothers and wives, upon which the health of the nation rested.[49] Medical journals commonly recommended girls' schools provide more regular and compulsory physical education.[50] Importantly, however, it was to be in a manner that was feminine, graceful and no way 'manly', excessive or strenuous.[51] Its aim was to produce women who would become mothers, not athletes.

Over a thousand people watched a display of women's gymnastics in Liverpool in 1867 but the journalist took care to stress it was an exhibition of 'feminine grace.'[52] Competition and vigorous sports were to be avoided; the female frame was deemed unsuited to them. Concerned with the popularity of women playing cricket, *The Lancet* in 1890, highlighted the risk of 'the blow of a cricket ball on the mammary gland'.[53] The threat to feminine anatomy clearly took precedence over the more obvious and greater risk of head injury. The writer hoped the 'manly art' would remain 'an exercise for the display of masculine prowess and agility' only.

The anxieties and concerns about physical exercise centred on women's biological essentialism, and 'otherness' compared to men. Consultant

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[48] Crichton-Browne 1883, 313; Tilt 1851, 47.
[49] Allen, "Plain Words on the Woman Question," *Fortnightly Review*, October 1889; Fothergill 1874, 384;
[50] Carter. 1890, 724; "Gymnastics for Girls," *BMJ,* 1, (1887): 167.
[51] "Exercise for Girls," *BMJ,* 1 (1884): 574.
[52] "Gymnastics by Ladies," *Morning Post,* December 24, 1867.
[53] "Feminine Physical Accomplishments," *Lancet,* July 1890, 37.

neurologist, Dr A Hughes Bennett claimed women's 'natural feebleness and delicacy of constitution render violent exercise...distasteful to her.'[54] 'To overdo exercise is as baneful as to overdo anything else. It is a wise plan never...to go beyond actual fatigue point', advised the Bath psychiatrist Lionel Weatherley.[55] Exercise was to be of a certain type; not excessive and retaining a sense of femininity. It trod a thin line between being sufficient to maintain overall wellbeing, but not enough to sap the energy needed for women's reproductive role, nor of a sufficient quality to compete with men. Extreme strenuous activity, such as that experienced by mountaineers, was advised against.

2.3 Medical Disagreement.

Whilst this viewpoint probably reflected the prevailing medical opinion, it was not without many detractors. Medicine was not as united as is often depicted.[56] Garret Anderson clearly disagreed with Maudsley. Her riposte to his view of the disabilities surrounding menstruation had the benefit, not only of a medical qualification but also personal experience. She accused him of perpetrating a 'great exaggeration' by implying, 'that women of average health are periodically incapacitated from serious work' by menstruation.[57] This, she argued, was far from the case – most women continued their normal daily tasks unaffected. She attacked his assumption that the male form was the norm to which all women aspired. 'The masculine type of excellence' she remarked, with a degree of sarcasm, does not 'include all that can be desired in humanity.'

Garret Anderson was not a lone voice. In 1876 American physician and suffragist Mary Putnam Jacobi wrote a prize-winning essay on women's supposed need to rest during menstruation. The following year she published it in a book that crucially used statistical and clinical evidence to rebuff Clarke's unsupported proposition that women's embrace of exercise, work and education was significantly affected by their periods.[58] The *Westminster Review,* renowned for

[54] Bennett , "Hygiene in the Higher Education of Women," *Popular Science Monthly*, 16, (1880): 519-530.
[55] Weatherly 1882, 17.
[56] McCrone 1984.
[57] Garrett Anderson, "Sex in Mind & Education: A Reply," *Fortnightly Review*, 15, (1874): 582-594.
[58] Jacobi 1877; Blackwell 1852 was the first woman doctor to stress the importance of exercise for women.

encouraging free thought and reform, also rejected Clarke's argument. The magazine presented statistics from American Colleges showing no difference in health between the sexes.[59] Indeed, girls often performed better than boys academically and the majority went on to marry and have children. The *BMJ* also published these findings later in the year.[60] One correspondent claimed the argument that 'education must be kept to a low standard, because of any peculiarity of sex, is a libel to Nature and a treason to its highest laws.'[61] A leader writer in the same journal, only a month later, was scathing in its criticism of the 'Maudsleys and Clarkes within medicine; the latter 'raised no objection' to women labouring as 'schoolmistresses, governesses, nurses and midwives' where they were 'half educated and poorly paid'. It accused them of 'logic as flawed as their benevolence'.[62]

Physician James Pollock had seen the benefit to women of greater exercise and 'increased intellectual independence'. Sport and the professions, he advised, should be open to women.[63] Even the necessity for girls to behave demurely was attacked. Physician Thomas Inman complained that, 'romping is not allowed because it is unladylike; the tired back is always to be kept upright; lolling is not permitted….Fun is mostly repressed, and a hearty laugh… punished with a bad mark.' He severely criticised doctors for labelling all young women's problems as hysterical.[64] Several other doctors promoted the idea of greater physical exercise and freedom for young women; some advocated treatment no different from that of boys.[65]

Historians have largely considered the language and discourse within medicine rather than women's actual responses to doctor's edicts.[66] To some extent this is understandable given the difficulty there is in accessing women's opinions on

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[59] "American Women: Their Health and Education,"*Westminster Review, 46,* (1874): 456-499. America was ahead of Britain in providing higher education for women. The University of Iowa admitted women from1855 others followed quickly. Women only colleges were formed in 1865 (Vassar), 1874(Smith) and 1883 (Bryn Mawr).
[60] "Influence of Higher Education on the Health of Girls." *BMJ, 2,* (1874b): 503.
[61] C.S, "Sex in Education," *BMJ*, 1 (1874): 530-1.
[62] "The Education of Women." *BMJ,* 1, (1874a): 653-4.
[63] Pollock 1883, 552–554.
[64] Inman 1874, 179–188.
[65] Batten 1887; Carter et al. 1890; "Gymnastic for Girls." *BMJ,* 1, (1887):167.
[66] McCrone 1988b; Strange 2000;Vertinsky 1990;

such 'sensitive' matters as menstruation. But here, women's behaviour and activities often provide more reliable information about their reaction to medical advice than words. Vertinsky's claim that women were socialised by the medical profession into understanding the demands and limitation of their bodies assumes there was only one medical opinion and, of course, that women were listening to it. It is important to recognise that many of the leading voices in medicine were not ones most middle or upper-class women would hear. They were consultant neurologists, psychiatrists and physicians; very few were general practitioners. The Garrett Anderson-Maudsley exchange was unusual for its public enactment. She chastises him 'for placing medical and physiological views before the readers of a literary periodical' rather than in a 'professional journal.'

Although medicine aimed advice at women, Garrett Anderson suggests they paid little heed to it. In reply to Maudsley's assertion that women could not 'disregard their special physiological functions' she replied that was exactly what they did do.[67] Advice books for a lay readership, moreover, often contained conflicting opinions. *The Book of Health* (1883), for example, which aimed at putting current medical opinions before the public, contained articles that on the one hand criticised the effect of too much study and exercise for women and on the other encouraged it.[68] Moreover the involvement and behaviour of some doctors in implementing the CD acts fostered a sense of distrust of medicine's professional neutrality amongst several women.[69]

Medical recommendations, therefore, could be confusing. In part this can be traced to the challenges and internal difficulties the medical profession was experiencing. The British Medical Association, still in its infancy, was founded in 1855 to try to counter the power and influence of the two Royal Colleges (of Physicians and Surgeons) and provide some unified representation for general practitioners. Entry into medicine became standardised only with the Medical Act of 1858 which, for the first time, marginalised quacks and unqualified practitioners. There were power struggles among the different fields within

[67] Garrett Anderson 1874.
[68] Gay 1984a; Morris 1883, 313, 552–554, 724; Robbins 2008 discuss this in more detail.
[69] Summers 1999.

medicine and a desire among physicians to distance themselves from irregular, unqualified 'healers'. Socially, doctors were not always thought 'respectable' – something represented in fiction. Lady Chettam in George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1872), for example, viewed them 'more on a footing with servants.' Given these internal struggles and efforts to assimilate new scientific developments, often coming from Germany and France, it is hardly surprising that medicine did not always speak with one voice.[70] Eliot's Dr Lydgate is again a good example; returning from study in Paris, older medical colleagues viewed his methods and opinions with some scepticism.

2.4 Influence of Doctors.

To claim then that the medical profession was authoritative enough to lead a large sector of the population into a particular mode of behaviour, as Vertinsky explicitly does and others have intimated, seems debatable.[71] Whilst, no doubt, many educated women knew of the discussions within science and medicine, as seen for example in the memoirs of mountaineer Elizabeth Spence-Watson, the degree to which they influenced their lives is probably less than previously suggested.[72]

A concrete example of this lies in the meticulous mountaineering records of sisters Anna and Ellen Pigeon (précised in Appendix 3C). These show that during their six-week annual Alpine tours, designed to include the maximum number of summits or high passes, they rarely stayed in one place more than two days. When they did it was generally because of poor weather, not their health. There was no resting for seven days as suggested by some doctors because of menstruation. On the contrary, they threw themselves into extremely hard physical exertion. The climbing records of Lucy Walker and Emily Hornby also suggest this but, as they were not so meticulously kept, give more room for

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[70] For a comprehensive overview of history of medicine see Gelfand 1993; Porter 1999.
[71] Gorham 1982, 85–97; Hargreaves 1994, 42–62; McCrone 1984, 114–115; Park 1987; Smith-Rosenberg and Rosenberg 1973; Strange 2000;Vertinsky 1990.
[72] "Elizabeth Spence- Watson. Family Chronicles." Beck 2013, 11, 13, 153, and unnumbered page dated 1889. Elizabeth Spence-Watson attended British Association for Advancement of Science meetings from 1863 when held near her home in Newcastle. Francis Galton often stayed with the Spence-Watsons.

doubt.[73] None of these women explicitly wrote about defying medical advice, but their willingness to undertake a strenuous activity like mountaineering can only be interpreted in one of two ways. Either they knew of doctor's opinions about the adverse effects of excessive exercise and chose to ignore them or they were unaware. If they were oblivious it suggests medical advice and opinion were not as widespread or influential as supposed. These women, after all, came from a section of society that was educated, concerned with business, the professions and government; they generally kept abreast of contemporary developments. It appears unlikely major medical advances would have passed them by.

The Alpine Club membership contained several doctors. It might be expected that fellow climbers would take their opinions more seriously than others. An article in the *Alpine Journal* by Clifford Allbutt, a leading physician and an AC member, shows this was not the case. His paper entitled 'The Health and Training of Mountaineers' equated women with boys and advised 'no man should undertake a prolonged and arduous excursion until he has done growing, and… no woman should undertake it at all unless ... endowed with a masculine frame.'[74] Climbers Elizabeth Spence-Watson, Lucy Walker, Emily Hornby and Meta Brevoort, contemporaries of Allbutt, with relatives who were also AC members, clearly ignored this advice, as did the even greater number of young men who regularly besieged the Alps.[75] Allbutt may have been eminent within medicine and a climber himself, but there is little evidence his view on exercise was accepted by either male or female.

3. Backgrounds of Women Climbers

Women who enjoyed exploring the mountains, like men, came mainly from the upper reaches of the middle class. Families like those of Mary de la Beche Nicholl, Mabel Pilkington, Mary and Annie Pasteur, Lucy Walker and Emma Winkworth were involved in business or industry.[76] Several women's relatives were members of parliament or civil servants - for example, Jane Quentin's father

[73] See Appendix of Women's Climbs.
[74] Allbutt 1876, 32.
[75] Mumm, vol 2 ,4–6.
[76] Mumm 1923; Thomas 1979.

William Crawford and Jane Arnold's husband William Forster.[77] Merchants, lawyers and clergymen were particularly well represented. The fathers of Katherine and Frances Richardson, Emily Hornby and Frances Havergal were all vicars[78]; Edith Wills, Eliza Cole and Elizabeth Spence-Watson's families were lawyers[79]; Anna and Ellen Pigeon's father was a wine merchant, Mary Taylor's traded in cloth and Grace Hirst's family ran a paper mill.[80] While most women who walked and climbed were from similar backgrounds, a few, such as Frederica Plunket and Elizabeth Hawkins-Whitshed (or Le Blond as she is more commonly known), had aristocratic origins.[81]

Although many women like Margaret Jackson, Lucy Walker and Elizabeth Spence-Watson went to the Alps with their families, it seems many women went either alone or only with female friends.[82] These women were financially independent and adept at organising the, sometimes complex, logistics of a summer tour; booking guides, transport and accommodation required flexibility to allow for the vagaries of mountain weather. Travelling completely alone became more common in the later years of the nineteenth century, as shown by the expeditions of Muriel Dowie, Beatrice Tomasson and Gertrude Bell.[83] However, travelling unaccompanied was not something exclusive to this later period; women such as Emily Hornby, Sophia Holworthy and Katherine Richardson routinely travelled alone from the early 1870s. [84]

Most women were Anglicans but displayed varied commitments to their faith. Some, like Frances Havergal and Marion Ross, were clearly devout, while for others a sense of duty rather than genuine religious fervour emanates from their writing. On more than one occasion, for example, Emily Hornby, although a vicar's daughter showed annoyance, mixed only with a slight sense of guilt, at

[77] Cooper 2004; Rudmore Brown 2004; Warren 2004.
[78] "Alloys Pollinger Führerbüche"1873, K11, AC. London; Bayne and Scott 2004; Five Ladies 2003; Paillon 1927.
[79] Mumm 1923.
[80] Five Ladies 2003; Hansen 2004.
[81] Hansen 2010; unknown 2000;
[82] Catlow 1861; Crane 1881; Edwards 1873; E.L.S 1934; Five Ladies 2003; Holworthy 1885; Hornby 1907; Le Blond 1928; Pigeon 1885; Plunket 1875.
[83] Bell 1929; Dowie 1891, 135. Bell & Dowie are representative of the idea of the new woman, which is discussed in chapter 6.
[84] Holworthy 1885; Hornby 1907; Le Blond 1928.

being unable to start her climbing on a Sunday because the guides needed to attend mass.[85] Elizabeth Spence- Watson, Mariana Fox-Tuckett, Mary Carr, Mary de la Beche Nicholl and Jane Arnold came from Quaker backgrounds or married men who were Quakers, [86] a sect particularly well represented within mountaineering as a whole.[87] This is especially relevant given the Quakers' egalitarian views of women's role in society.

It is noticeable that several women came from backgrounds that supported more radical views of society. The father of Emma Winkworth, the first woman to climb the Jungfrau, for example, was Thomas Thomasson (1808-1876), an ardent supporter of universal suffrage, chartism and the Anti-Corn Law League.[88] Mary Taylor (1817-1893), close friend of Charlotte Bronte and keen explorer of the mountains, was passionate that women should earn their own living.[89] She wrote a number of articles on the subject for *The Victoria Magazine*, several of which were later published as *The First Duty of Women* (1870).[90]

Menie Muriel Dowie, who explored the Carpathians alone in 1890, and whose husband later divorced her because of adultery with fellow mountaineer Edward Fitzgerald, was an extreme example of female independence. Her behaviour, mountain dress (as seen in figure 9) and novel, *Gallia* (1895), with its unusual view of sexual relationships, firmly placed her as someone fitting the notion of the 'new woman' – a phenomenon that is discussed more fully in chapter 6.

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[85] Hornby 1907, 21.
[86] Beck 2011; Thomas 1979, 13; Mumm 1923.
[87] Hansen 1991, 117.
[88] Howe 2004.
[89] Dowie 1891, 135.
[90] Taylor 1870.



Figure 9. Menie Muriel Dowie, dressed for the mountains (Dowie 1891, 135)

It would be misleading, however, to create the impression that most women who enjoyed walking and climbing in the mountains held such radical views. The truth is more complex and varied. Certainly, most possessed a notable self-confidence and quietly held the view that women were as competent as men. Climbers Anna and Ellen Pigeon, for example, when weather forced them to retreat from an expedition, ensured they recorded that an AC party were similarly defeated, the subtext being that neither gender nor ineptitude made them turn back.[91] Such a belief, however, did not make them as subversive as Dowie.

Women such as Hornby and Plunket acknowledged they were slower or weaker than most men - but did not restrict their activities as a result. Millicent Fawcett, although a well-known campaigner for women's rights, was not a trouser-wearing 'new woman' yet enjoyed climbing Monte Rosa (4634m) in 1872.[92] Katherine Richardson, one of the most successful female alpinists of the century, wore skirts even when other climbers in the 1890s were beginning to adopt more male clothing.[93]

91 Pigeon 1885.
92 Fawcett 1924, 103.
93 Gardiner 1917; Paillon 1927.

Women who climbed were independent, confident and often adventurous. That same sense of independence led to a variety of opinions and lifestyles. Greater individuality meant less adherence to social rules and a wider variety of behaviours; these helped to reveal women's 'true nature' – much as Mill had advocated.[94] With the fervent debates and discussions in Britain concerning the 'woman question' it is probably unsurprising that such energy overflowed to give some women greater confidence to undertake new challenges. Hence, it could be argued that the evolution of female mountaineers was symptomatic of the period.

4. The Development of Walking into Climbing

Although upbringing and social background helped create an interest in mountains, it did not necessarily correlate with exploring them; it is possible, after all, to enjoy the Alpine ambience from the hotel terrace. The question is what was it that enticed numerous women away from an easy, sedentary holiday to one often involving extreme exercise and physicality, where they encountered the limits and possibilities of their bodies. Even if women were familiar with walking in the mountains, how did some end up tackling many of the highest Alpine summits requiring the full panoply of mountaineering – ropes, perilous ascents and nights spent in the open?

4.1Books.

One source of encouragement was reading of other women's Alpine travels. Despite the relative lack of women's accounts compared to men's – a subject considered more fully in chapter 6 – several books were available. These created a wider awareness of women's activities. One of the reasons some authors wrote was specifically to encourage others – to entice women like themselves, to be more adventurous, go beyond the confines of the well-trodden paths and move outside the usually prescribed areas for women. These accounts, consciously or unconsciously, helped erode the dominant view of the mountains as a male space. They destabilised the male hegemony in a similar way to that proposed by Butler and Bordo. The existence of this literature, in itself, is indicative of a ready female audience.

[94] Mill 2008, 484.

Eliza Cole's *A Lady's Tour round Monte Rosa* (1859)*,* which described excursions in 1850, 1856 and 1858, was one of the first. She included advice on dress, footwear, the necessity of travelling light, reading material, guidebooks and dealing with porters and guides, all specifically from a feminine perspective. She warned, for example, that Italian guides had a tendency to be slightly hysterical when 'ladies' were in the party; they exaggerated difficulties where there were none – a criticism also levelled at Rev. Samuel King's guidebook; he travelled this same area with his wife in the 1850s.[95]

Cole, by contrast, was enthusiastic but not given to hyperbole. She begins and ends her book with explicit encouragement for women to follow her example. She reassures readers that 'any lady blessed with moderate health and activity... may accomplish a tour of Monte Rosa with great delight.'[96] Tacitly acknowledging that some women spent much of their time indoors, Cole claimed 'two or three hours in a badly ventilated room' was more fatiguing 'than a journey over an eight-hour pass in the pure invigorating mountain air.'[97]

In 1860 Jane Freshfield, although not aiming her book specifically at women, in the opening pages stresses that,

> wives and sisters seek participation in the pleasures they hear so vividly described; - one great attraction to this vast "playground" being that it affords relaxation and amusement suited to almost every variety of mental and bodily capacity.

As with most women who wrote about their climbing she insists they do not have to 'aspir[e] to exploits which may be deemed unfeminine....[but] may now enjoy the wildest scenes of mountain grandeur with comparative ease.'[98] This tendency for women to use such self-effacing remarks is discussed in chapter six – the important point here is the encouragement and confidence such accounts gave to others. Freshfield even reassured women that 'rough but sufficient accommodation is provided in the high Alps' to allow ladies to now visit

95 Cole 1859, 11–12.
96 Cole 1859, 1, 392.
97 Cole 1859, 1, 6–11,391.
98 Freshfield 1861,2. An analysis of the different writing strategies employed by women, occurs in chapter 6.

previously ‘unattainable districts.’[99] In the early 1860s there were, in fact, very few huts and these were usually extremely basic. Her comment, however, is a useful insight into the preparedness of some upper middle-class women to accept, and gloss over, the greater privation and ‘roughings’ required of mountain travel.

Frederica Plunket continued the encouraging theme; like Cole, she openly aimed her book at a female audience but her expeditions were more adventurous. Her object in writing was to persuade women to expand their horizons, to ‘no longer pause on the threshold of the Alpine world, but pass its snow-marked boundaries.’ She claimed there was a ‘borderland between the forbidden ground of danger and the beaten paths of safety where many fine glacier passes and high snow mountains’ existed. Here, she insisted, any woman with ‘strength, health, the habit of taking exercise and a perfectly steady head’ can have ‘ an endless number of delightful tours.’[100] There is a distinct sense of sisterhood in these accounts, of truly desiring women to branch out, to experience the greater depth and flavour of more expansive, challenging tours; to give up the tried and tested routes offering only distant views of the peaks and immerse themselves in the intimacy of the mountains.

Eliza Tuckett’s amusingly clever sketchbooks of her family’s alpine travels in the mid-1860s depicted their mountain tours with a keen and satirical eye for detail. Although only men are shown attempting the highest summits, they did not have a monopoly on physical challenges. Mule-riding and walking over the mountains, often in the rain, is shown in all its comic glory (Figure 10). [101]

99 Freshfield 1861, 3.
100 Plunket 1875, 2–3.
101 Tuckett 1866. Her book was popular, a second edition was published two years later & subsequent books were advertised as “by the author of a voyage en zigzag”.

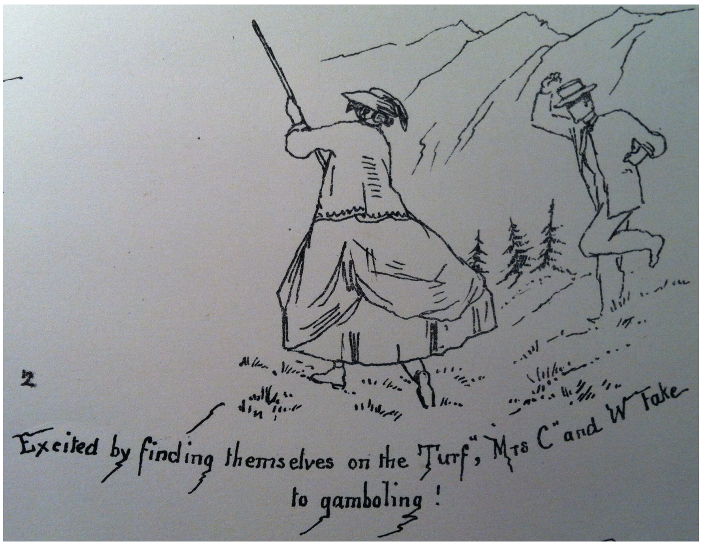


Figure 10. "Excited by finding themselves on the Turf, Mrs C and W take to gamboling!" Pencil sketch in the Bernese Oberland 1866 from *How We Spent the Summer* by Elizabeth Tuckett.[102]

Amelia Edwards, known for her work in Egyptology, wrote more seriously but revealed how less familiar areas of Europe's mountains were also accessible for women. Later in the 1880s Elizabeth Le Blond wrote several books describing how, against medical advice, she began mountaineering, became a well known climber, and subsequently spent much of her life in Switzerland.[103]

For women contemplating a holiday in the Alps, therefore, there were several books showing potential activities and places of interest. They nearly all depicted a life at variance to that experienced by most middle-class women in Britain – but that in many ways was, and remains, the point of a holiday; to escape normality for a while. As will be shown, an Alpine holiday in the second half of the nineteenth century, could enable a loosening or, on occasions, complete freedom from the usual forms of etiquette, propriety and social expectations of home.

4.2.Natural history.

Although books may have encouraged some women to venture further afield, for others it was interest in natural history and botany. As Ann Shteir has shown, however, study of these subjects was very much in the role of interested

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102 Tuckett 1866, 5.
103 Edwards 1873; Main 1892; Burnaby 1886; Le Blond 1883; Le Blond 1903.

amateurs rather than as part of any formal scientific endeavour. Although serious botanical study in the early decades of the nineteenth century had attracted and interested many women, from the 1850s botany gradually became embraced by male academic science.[104] As Hevly writes, like mountaineering, science increasingly was imbued with a type of heroism that reinforced its association with men rather than women.[105] Partly in reflection of this development, in the second half of the century, women botanists were largely restricted to amateur status or writing popular accounts often for children or other women. Nevertheless, an interest in Alpine plants attracted many and often led to exploration of more distant parts of the mountain than originally planned. Agnes and Maria Catlow, for example, keen amateur naturalists, recounted the delayed arrival of a young girl at their hotel. She finally arrived, 'her hat awry, cloak on her arm and her dress torn to rags.' Distracted in the search for a particular plant she had strayed progressively from the beaten track towards higher, more inaccessible and remote rocks.[106] Sisters Frederica and Katherine Plunket were also keen botanists and artists. The National Botanical Garden, Ireland, holds over a thousand of their botanical illustrations. This interest may have been an added stimulus to extend their explorations of the high mountains.[107]

Mary De La Beche Nicholl, who enjoyed outdoor exercise and natural history from an early age on her family's estate in Wales, became an enthusiastic lepidopterist, traveller and Fellow of the Entomological Society. Like many other women such as Lucy Wills and Elizabeth Spence-Watson, she visited the Alps for the first time on her honeymoon in 1860. Nicholl's biographer claims, 'nothing acted upon her senses with more insidious force than the wild majestic beauty of Europe's mountains.'[108] She began mountaineering that year and was photographed in 1905, at the age of sixty-six, still climbing (Figure 11). Care must be taken in interpreting this photograph, however. The walking stick

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[104] Shteir 1997.
[105] Hevly 1997.
[106] Catlow 1861, 283.
[107] Plunket 1985; Plunket 1875.
[108] Thomas 1979, 41.

suggests the composition was probably contrived to make the climb seem more dramatic.

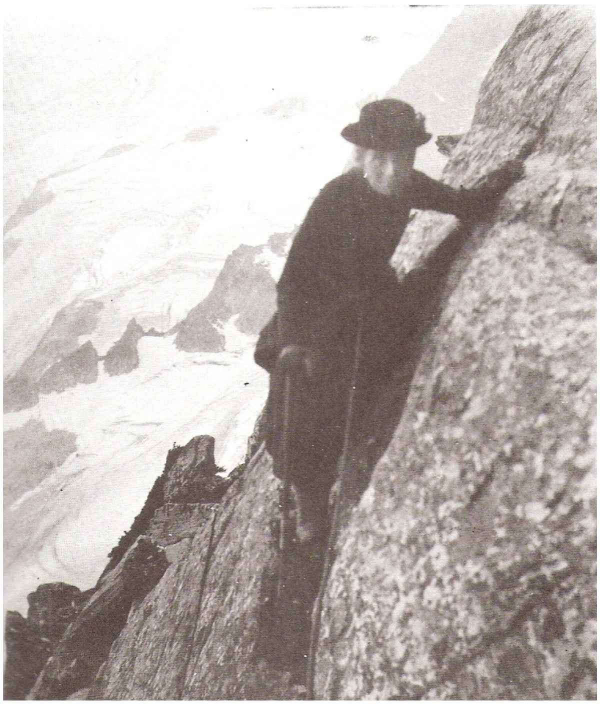


Figure 11. Mary De La Beche Nicholl climbing in British Columbia in 1905. (Thomas 1979)

Books, natural history and honeymoon excursions all played their part in introducing women to the high Alps. For many, probably most women, however, it was the tempting views of high pastures and glaciers glimpsed from their valley walks that stimulated them to go further. These tantalising sights encouraged the inquisitive and adventurous into longer subsequent excursions that gradually went higher and higher. Eventually they reached the snowline where, if they were to continue, guides and the whole paraphernalia of climbing were required.[109]

To get even to this point, however, necessitated a distinct shift for some women from their normal walking experience in Britain. Although there were a few women, like Dorothy Wordsworth, who had walked extensively and regularly, for many women walking was confined to gardens, private estates or defined promenades and parks where they were accompanied by some form of

[109] A detailed explanation of what climbing involved is considered in a later chapter.

chaperone.[110] As discussed previously, walking for leisure grew in popularity from the end of the eighteenth century, but it remained predominantly a male activity. Leslie Stephen and friends, for example, formed a walking group called The Sunday Tramps that ventured far and wide.[111] I have not uncovered any similar women's gathering at this time. A woman walking alone generally remained symbolic of non-conformity, independence and originality; something Jane Austen often used when depicting her characters.[112] Elizabeth Bennett, for example, walked three miles across country, alone, to be with her ill sister. The more socially elite Bingleys wondered 'what could she mean by it?' They concluded it was 'An abominable sort of conceited independence.' [113]

Middle-class women, therefore, who began to walk in the mountains, even in a limited fashion, came from a society where this was not a commonly accepted part of their life. Abroad, however, it was easier to invoke a different set of rules. The following two case studies demonstrate this. Crucially they show the almost unconscious way walking evolved into climbing with the concomitant discovery of another dimension to their bodies' abilities. These studies also demonstrate the importance of employing a female rather than male perspective. Women climbers have often been overlooked arguably because clubs have often been the lens through which histories of mountaineering have been written. Such institutions, created and run by men, in the nineteenth century, frequently excluded or marginalised women. To get close to female climbers a different approach is needed; one that looks at the basics of how, where and on what basis women began to climb – something that has recently been acknowledged as important for the investigation of women's sport generally.[114]

[110] De Selincourt 1941; Solnit 2001, 95–97.
[111] Maitland 1906, 63.
[112] Walking in the city alone risked being seen as immoral. For more consideration of this see Walkowitz 1992; McDowell 1999, 152–160 discusses how the equivalent of a female flâneuse could evolve in cities in response to the rise of consumerism at the end of the nineteenth century.
[113] Austen 2013b, 255.
[114] Osborne and Skillen 2015.

4.3. Frances Ridley Havergal.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879), a clergyman's daughter more renowned as a hymn writer and poet than mountaineer, visited the Alps regularly between 1869 and 1876.[115] One of her principal initial reasons was to proselytise the Protestant faith amongst the Catholic cantons. 'And all the way no Bible, no gospel, but souls walking in darkness,' she claimed.[116] Apart from her religious fervour, however, she had harboured an idealistic vision of the mountains since childhood.

> I ...always thought of eternal snow and perfect peace together and longed to see the one and drink in the other.[117]

Initially her expeditions, as for many people on their first Alpine tour, were gentle. Accompanied by her sister, brother-in-law and niece, journeys into the mountains from villages and towns were modest and largely on horseback; the group stayed mainly in the valleys. Any walking was generally an evening stroll for a mile or two with minimal ascent; there was little physical exertion involved. She witnessed other women undertaking more challenging walks, however. At Murren, 'two good-tempered and most plucky English ladies actually set off to the Stachelberg, some miles farther and a good deal higher,' despite the sleet and rain. Whether this encouraged her is not made explicit but a month later there is evidence of a change occurring. 'Breakfast at six and start on foot at half-past …a day after my own heart!', Havergal declared. This day included a seven and a half mile walk before 9.30 a.m, a climb to a summit above the Col de Balme (2204m) followed by a mule ride down to Argentiere (1244m) and carriage to Chamonix where the party arrived at 'twilight' at the end of at least a fourteen-hour day.[118] Her activities had steadily become more rigorous as the mountains tightened their grip on her imagination.

In Chamonix (1060m) Havergal became more adventurous, taking longer walks at higher altitude. Two days after arriving, for example, she rode to Pierre Pointue (2038m) a chalet on the first stage of the ascent of Mont Blanc. Once

[115] Bayne and Scott 2004; Grierson 1979.
[116] Crane 1881, 170.
[117] Crane 1881, 33.
[118] Crane 1881, 40, 70, 73.

there, she enjoyed 'a bona fide scramble an hour and a half higher up ...across the ends of snowdrifts and right through torrents and up rocks' until 'we were about eight thousand six hundred feet high (2600m), and I at least was proportionately happy.'[119] Climbing almost 600m in ninety minutes, at altitude, represents a good level of mountaineering fitness.[120]

Havergal's 'proportionate' happiness appears inextricably entangled with the experience of hard physical exertion in a dramatic landscape. They had ' been more than halfway up Mont Blanc and would have gone to the Grand Mulets had we been prepared for it,' she boasted.[121] The Grand Mulets (3052m) was one of the first mountain huts to be built. It perches on a rocky outcrop in the middle of the Glacier de Bossons from which the final ascents of Mont Blanc, in the nineteenth century, were made (Figure 14).[122] It was later to be the focus of Havergal's more public alpine exploit.



Figure 12. Typical tourist excursion on the Mer de Glace in 1900, below the Inn at Montanvert, Chamonix. [123]

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[119] Crane 1881, 75–76.
[120] Cliff 1986.
[121] Crane 1881, 76.
[122] Due to changes in the glacier, increased risk from seracs and crevasses it is now only used regularly in winter.
[123] http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mer_de_Glace_1900.jpg. It is notable how high the glacier is compared to the present day.

Buoyed by her achievements the 1869 trip came to a close with a trip across the Mer de Glace. As detailed earlier, walking on this glacier was part of the 'Chamonix experience'. Mule trains ferried steady streams of tourists from Chamonix to Montanvert, where people walked down to the glacier as in figure 12. The close proximity and accessibility of glaciers to Chamonix was one of the major reasons for the town's popularity.

Havergal, already showing her physical enjoyment of exercise, walked rather than rode from Chamonix but then intended to follow the normal tourist routine; to simply walk a little on the ice and return directly to the inn at Montanvert. To cross the glacier completely led to the 'Mauvais Pas' – 'half staircase and half shelf about a foot wide round the face of a perpendicular rock' which she felt was beyond her. Figure 13 shows the terrain and how metal railings and ropes provided some security for those attempting it.

She explains how, 'once across it stood to reason I wanted to go on and bit by bit we approached the Mauvais Pas to my intense delight.'[124] What began as a walk became an enjoyable, steep scramble over precipitous ground. Confronting and overcoming such physical obstacles was new; negotiating the Mauvais Pas she declared, in an exposition befitting the sublime, was 'most charmingly awful', scary, but exciting.[125] Witnessing some men having difficulties crossing the same rock face that she managed relatively easily heightened awareness of her achievement and boosted her confidence.[126] As for many women in the mountains, it was probably the first time she had pushed her body so far and certainly the first experience in that type of environment.

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124 Crane 1881, 78.
125 Crane 1881, 79.
126 Crane 1881, 78.

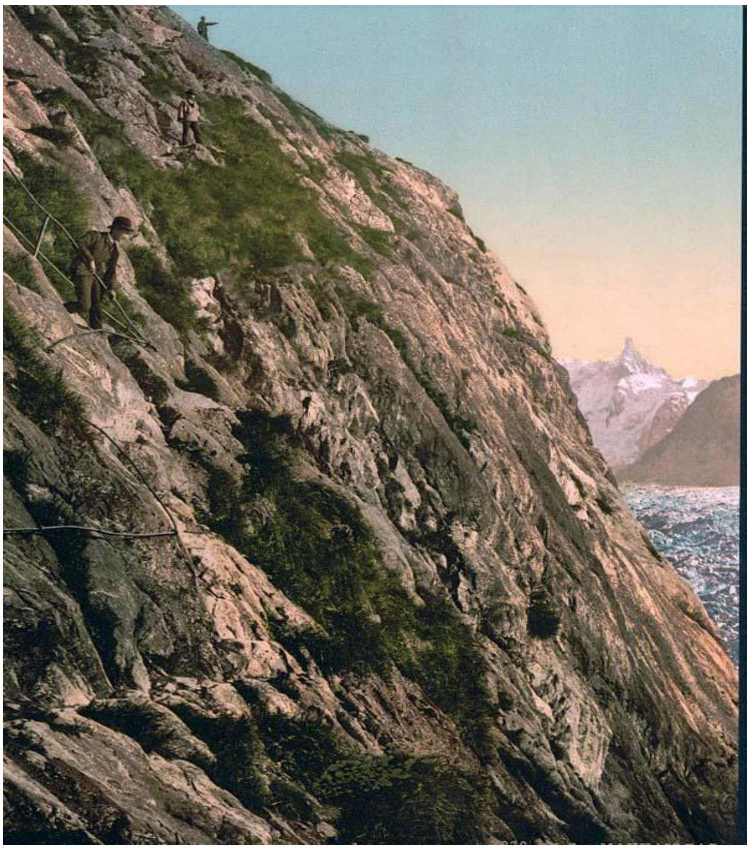


Figure 13. The Mauvais Pas, Chamonix (circa 1900).[127]

She realised the transformation in both fitness and attitude that had developed since the beginning of their tour. Towards the end of her Chamonix visit, a walk to La Flégère opposite Mont Blanc was 'selected for a nice little afternoon excursion, only five and a half hours starting at 3.30.' Writing to her sister she compared it to their shorter Murren expeditions only a few weeks earlier, which, she confesses, 'we thought a very trying day's work.' 'See how we have improved' she boasts.[128]

Havergal's 1871 trip with friend Elizabeth Clay was a very different experience from her first tour. The earlier visit had shown what was possible. She confessed,

> I did not know till the summer before last what a combination of keen enjoyment and benefit to health with opportunities of usefulness and open doors innumerable was to be found in a *pedestrians tour by unprotected females!*[129]

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[127] http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Le_Mauvais_Pas,_Chamonix.jpg
[128] Crane 1881, 77.
[129] Crane 1881, 169.

The italics are hers and as this statement suggests the two women went alone – an independent, autonomous 'girl's trip.' It also differed by expressly intending to climb some summits – something she had never attempted before.

They started their holiday with more confidence than two years previously. Like other climbers discussed in this study, previous experience encouraged attempts at more challenging targets in subsequent seasons.[130] Havergal and Clay, for example, immediately undertook nine-mile walks and began the day's activities early, in the traditional alpine manner. By the fourth day Havergal had already conquered her first peak, the Furcahorn (3165m). ' I enjoyed the scramble exceedingly and got on capitally. The view was sublime,' she exclaimed.[131]

The tour was far more physically demanding than her first trip. During the holiday she accomplished six peaks or high passes at, or above, 3000m and most days involved walking 8 to 12 miles, often including substantial ascent or descent. The latter, when prolonged, was as arduous as climbing up. Ascending the Eggischhorn(2934m), she claimed, was 'the hardest walk we ever had in our lives, the steepest possible track nearly the whole way, rising straight up to 7372 ft' and more difficult than the longer twelve-mile walk of the preceding day.[132] Later, travelling to Zermatt, they walked 17 miles, involving a 2000m descent and 500m ascent.[133] This was a different person to the one, two years previously, who had viewed a three-hour stroll in Murren as strenuous.

Havergal's tours progressed from walking to include minor summits for which she now employed guides to negotiate glaciers and crevasses. In Zermatt, amongst other excursions, she climbed both the Görner Grat (3120m) and the Hornlein (3100m), declaring 'we are in such good training ...anything under 9000ft does not count at all.'[134] Her enthusiasm for the mountains explodes in the description of her early morning ascent of the Görner Grat in 1871.

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[130] See appendix for details of Pigeon sisters, Lucy Walker, Meta Brevoort and Emily Hornby's comprehensive climbing records.
[131] Crane 1881, 115.
[132] Crane 1881, 117.
[133] Crane 1881, 129.
[134] Crane 1881, 137.

> It is really exciting and wonderful and thrilling, beyond almost anything, to see that *first* marvellous rosefire suddenly light up peak after peak. I think it beats the Hallelujah Chorus! [135]

These unprecedented experiences clearly unleashed a barrage of unique sensations both physical and emotional.

Perhaps the climb that most demonstrates the enormous change that had occurred in what she saw as achievable was the first ascent of the season to the Grand Mulets hut (3051m), in 1873. As in 1869, she went to Pierre Pointue but, whereas previously she rode, four years later she walked – an ascent of 1000 metres. They spent the night at the primitive chalet ready for an early start. 'I had a little wooden room with single boards between my head and the back den where the guides snored', she noted.[136] Just before 3.00 a.m the Havergal party began their climb, roped together to ascend the steeply crevassed snow covered slopes as in Figure 14.



Figure 14. The Grands Mulets hut is on the rocky outcrop in the middle of the Glacier, top right in the photograph (2014).

Crossing the Bossons glacier so early in the season meant snow-covered crevasses were a lurking danger; great care was needed by the guides to find a

135 Crane 1881, 134.
136 Crane 1881, 210. Discussion of how climbing parties operated, facilities available & how women negotiated potentially difficult circumstances are discussed in chapter 5.

safe route. Additionally, the last slopes to the hut 'were very steep' although 'not at all dangerous,' she reassured her sister, 'as we got footing nearly knee deep with every step'[137].

It may have been safe but walking knee-deep in snow is exhausting, even on the flat; on a steep slope at an altitude of 3000 metres it is invariably gruelling. It rebuffs the idea that women were anxious to avoid extreme exercise. Havergal's declaration, however, that she 'did not feel the least tired ...and could have gone on much higher with ease' needs to be viewed with some suspicion. Writing to her sister she was keen to underline she was avoiding undue risks – many of her letters are peppered with such reassurances. After a short rest the party descended by 'a series of glides and plunges' and eventually, by glissading - a controlled form of sliding either in the standing or sitting position. 'I need not say that after these exploits there was not an inch of dry clothing' she wrote.

They encountered several dangers on the descent; Havergal tripped when they were still roped together, causing one of the guides to also fall. Only quick thinking stopped their 'rapid spin down a *very* steep incline.' Similarly they paused under hanging seracs 'but the guides said it was 'not good' to stand there; the giants have an objectionable trick of tumbling over.'[138] Probably a retrospective awareness of the dangers involved - crevasses, avalanches and ice falls - prompted her to reject the idea of returning to complete the climb to the summit despite people 'tell[ing] me I am *fully* equal to doing Mont Blanc *easily.'* [139] Nevertheless this English lady had achieved a landmark for women; the first female to accomplish 'la premiere ascension' of the season to the Grand Mulets.

It epitomises the change in this woman, who had, only a few years previously, felt a three or four-mile valley walk strenuous. As for other women Havergal's tours clearly show how walking gradually evolved into climbing. Her initial intentions became transformed by the material experience of the body in the environment. The ability, both mentally and physically, to adapt to the varying terrain made attempting summits a possibility. Despite being cold, wet and

[137] Crane 1881, 214.
[138] Crane 1881, 215.
[139] Crane 1881, 219.

under severe physical strain, Havergal showed real enjoyment in being *in* the environment rather than viewing it from a distance. This encouraged further and further explorations away from towns and villages to the remoteness of the higher mountains.

The Alpine space, which prior to her visits was a remote, idealistic childhood vision, was transformed into a tangible reality through determination and physical endeavour. It became a space where she was able to fulfil herself on several different levels; as an evangelist, as a walker who developed mountaineering skills, as a woman who came to understand the physical capabilities of her body and where she experienced a freedom from the strictures visited on women as opposed to men. Havergal frequently commented how she 'felt like a boy.'[140] Certeau explained how people make places into meaningful spaces.[141] The presence of women climbers and walkers, like Havergal, not only diluted the perception of the mountains as a male arena but also encouraged other women to own the space of the mountains. Holworthy, for instance, writing in 1882 clearly knew of, and had been influenced by, Havergal's Alpine excursions.[142]

4.4 Five Ladies.

The second case study concerns a group of five women who toured the Alps in 1874 (Fig 15). The leader was 57-year-old Mary Taylor, school friend and lifelong confidante of Charlotte Brontë.[143] Although Havergal and Taylor shared similar middle-class backgrounds, they were not alike in much else. The mountains may have been a unifying interest but women climbers, like those involved in various women's rights campaigns, were not a homogenous group; indeed, they often held contrasting political and religious views. Taylor, for example, was bold, confident and unafraid to publicise her controversial opinions.[144] She fervently believed women – particularly middle-class women, including wives – should earn their own living. She objected to the limited types

[140] Crane 1881, 133, 174.
[141] Certeau 1988.
[142] Holworthy 1885, 48.
[143] Bellamy 2002, 4–16, 36–42.
[144] Taylor 1870.

of jobs and education available to women compared to men, in particular the stereotypical roles of governess or lady's companion. This belief, coupled with family financial difficulties, prompted the twenty-eight-year-old Taylor to emigrate to New Zealand in 1845 where she started and ran a successful business in Wellington for the next fifteen years.



Figure 15. The 'Five Ladies' who toured in 1874; Mary Taylor is far left. The others are Grace Hirst, Minnie Neilson, Fanny Richardson & Marion Ross, the man is unknown.[145]

Returning to England she lived independently, travelled, wrote and campaigned for women to be active in rebelling against society's constraints.[146] Compared to Havergal, Taylor was more her own woman; in the mountains, for example, Havergal would not climb or walk without another woman or friend for company, whereas for Taylor this was not a concern.[147] Prior to 1874 Taylor had made several Alpine trips and clearly intended to introduce a group of younger

[145] Five Ladies 2003.
[146] Bellamy 2002.
[147] Crane 1881, 137; Bellamy 2002.

women to their delights.[148] Arriving in Chamonix, like Havergal, their initial activities were modest; they walked, sketched and botanised in the valley before beginning a few small excursions further up the mountainside. By the second week, however, they 'felt disposed for action, and set off ...about seven in the morning for Montanvert'. Unlike Havergal they stayed overnight at the Montanvert inn, and the following day negotiated the moraine ridges and deep crevasses of the Mer de Glace to get to the popular destination of the 'jardin', a rocky oasis in the middle of the glacier. Although disappointed at the 'stony heap' they found there, the climb immersed them in the mountains, at close quarters, for the first time. They were 'in a vast amphitheatre of mountains; icy walls rising on every hand ...a grand cold, sublime solitude.' By the time they returned to Chamonix they had been out more than fourteen hours and had witnessed some of the most desolate, if grandest, of Alpine spaces.[149] Like Havergal their excursions had become longer, more arduous and adventurous, but possibly because of Taylor's influence and their youth, progress was more rapid.

Two weeks after leaving Britain, three of the women, Grace Hirst, Fanny Richardson and Minnie Neilson climbed to the Grand Mulets hut (Figure 16).



Figure 16 Grand Mulets Hut circa 1870. Whymper's Lantern Slide. (AC Library)

Their journey, however, was very different to Havergal's. The latter went in June when snow still covered many crevasses, but the three young women were in

[148] Other group members were 28-year-old Grace Hirst, daughter of a friend of Taylor; 19-year-old Fanny Richardson, whose aunt Ellen Nussey was also a lifelong friend and correspondent with Bronte;two Scottish cousins, 24- year-old Minnie Neilson and 26-year-old Marion Ross. Richardson's younger sister Kate became a talented mountaineer & is discussed in the following chapter.

[149] Five Ladies 2003, 14, 24, 27.

late August, which meant they 'had to creep in and out of the crevasses by means of the steps cut in the walls of the ice ....Where these walls were more than perpendicular ladders were placed …to reach the tables above without difficulty.'[150]

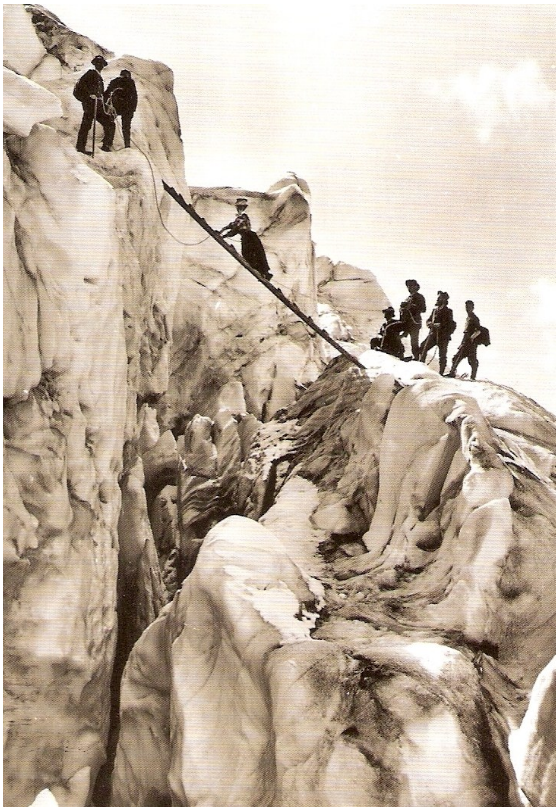


Figure 17. Ascension au Mt Blanc 1905 by Tiarraz depicts a rather extreme example of crossing a crevasse. The photographer's position below the woman serves to accentuate the drop beneath her.[151]

As in Figure 17, these could be enormous and not for the faint-hearted. Crevasses, for all their azure beauty and beguiling shapes, could be bottomless, steep and highly mobile.

On their way to the hut they passed a Spanish woman, Signora de Zumelzu, descending from the summit of Mont Blanc (4810).[152] She 'was in such good spirits and had enjoyed the expedition so much, that a spirit of envy seized us, and we at once desired to emulate her example.' Reassured by their guides they were capable of the ascent, more clothing was sent from Pierre Pointue, a pair of

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150 Five Ladies 2003, 27.
151 Tiarraz, "The Tiarraz Family of Chamonix," *Alpine Journal*, 80 (1975): 164.
152 Vallot, "Annuaire Du Club Alpin Francais," *Alpine Journal,* 14 (1888): 150-151.

boots was borrowed from the cook and preparations made to sleep at the hut; a basic shelter of two bedrooms, a kitchen and guide's room (fig.16). It was cramped with at least eleven people staying overnight; a girl from another party joined them in sharing two beds between four. Thin walls, snoring, altitude, wild dreams and lack of water completed the picture of a typical night spent high in a mountain hut.[153] Despite the privation involved, Hirst wrote there was 'something delightful ...in the fact of our doing something out of the way'.
They left at 3.00 a.m to tackle the 2000-metre climb to the summit. It was extremely hard work; they 'toiled through the snow for hours and hours.'[154] As the snow softened and the gradient steepened, it became increasingly laborious; Hirst 'felt thoroughly exhausted', lost her alpenstock, had an altitude-induced headache and contemplated giving up. Despite such difficulties, all three reached the summit and in a creditable time - twelve hours for the round trip to Mont Blanc and back to the Grands Mulets. Their day was not over, however. After a rest they continued across the glacier to Pierre Pointue where, following supper, they left for Chamonix which they entered at midnight – a twenty-one hour day. A truly remarkable achievement, which many current mountaineers might balk at yet three women, in 1874, achieved this almost accidentally and with improvised gear; the borrowed boots were too large and had to be stuffed with material to get a better fit. It is a splendid, if extreme, example of how women's excursions could change into something very different to the original plan.

The support and encouragement of the older Taylor, even though she did not accompany them to the Grand Mulets, provided background confidence for the younger women's actions. Taylor was the 'moving spirit' for this group but after their unplanned climb of Mont Blanc there was little need for more confidence-building.[155]

> 'Mountain-climbing is a most fascinating pursuit; at least we find it so. The more we do the more we want to do,' commented Hirst. 'Mont Blanc

[153] Five Ladies 2003, 30, 35.
[154] Five Ladies 2003, 39.
[155] Five Ladies 2003, 7.

> might be considered enough to satisfy the most aspiring tendencies; but we were ready and eager for anything of the kind that came our way.'[156]

Their tour continued for another five weeks, during which Hirst and Richardson crossed the Col d'Herens (3480) to Zermatt and attempted Piz Palu (3901) as well as completing many other easier expeditions.

4.5. Variety Not Homogeneity.

Bordo and Butler, as discussed earlier, both refer to ways of using the body in a manner that subverts the hegemonic norm. It is impossible to declare confidently that either Havergal or Taylor were consciously doing that in any political or radical sense. For Havergal it seems unlikely; there is an absence of contesting established norms in her letters or poetry. Nevertheless, an awareness and sense of envy of what was acceptable in terms of bodily behaviour for different genders exists.

> Oh the delicious freedom and sense of leisure of those days! …How we spied grand points of view from rocks above and (having no one to consult, or to keep waiting, or to fidget about us) stormed them with our alpenstocks and scrambled and leaped and laughed and raced as if we were not girls again but *downright boys!*[157]

She writes of feeling like a boy several times; on each occasion she associates it with a greater sense of liberty, specifically the physical freedom of movement.[158] If it is a form of subversion in the Butler/Bordo sense it is more subtle and nuanced, and represents more a frustration with the constraints experienced by women than any conscious stab at changing the established order.

By contrast, Taylor was committed to trying to change women's subservient position and restricted opportunities. She took every chance to challenge these constraints. Not only through her writing but also through freely arguing with, and admonishing, relative strangers over the issue.[159] For her the physical difficulties and achievements of climbing, for example, using the body in what was sometimes seen as a more 'masculine' manner, was a way of materially demonstrating women's capabilities. It seems likely that her motive in taking the

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[156] Five Ladies 2003, 57.
[157] Crane 1881, 169.
[158] Crane 1881, 136.
[159] Five Ladies 2003, 17–18.

four young women to the mountains was not only to experience a different culture, but also to realise a greater independence and understand what they could achieve physically. Taylor consciously tried to get women to behave differently, do more for themselves and not accept the existing gendered hierarchy.[160] In this respect she was disrupting the norm, as Bordo suggests.

Havergal and Taylor's party are a reminder that women's interests were varied. Whilst Hirst and Richardson seized every opportunity to explore the high mountains, Neilson did so less frequently and the fourth woman, Marion Ross, despite Taylor's encouragement, mainly chose to avoid any extreme exertion, preferring to read, write and sketch. The range of women who enjoyed the mountains at this 'entry level' was large and although almost exclusively middle-class, was nevertheless eclectic - not all were as youthful and able as those described above. Josephine Butler (1828-1906), for example, was a keen walker on her several trips to the Alps at least up to her fifty-third year. On more than one occasion she left her husband sketching on the lower slopes while she 'went higher.'[161]

Guides' *führerbüche*r containing testimonials by satisfied clients, are powerful evidence of the existence of many women who explored the mountains, and like Havergal, gradually made progress in the quantity or quality of what they attempted. Mary Whitehead, for example, unknown apart from her testimony in Josef Imboden's book, in 1866 used him to guide her over the passes around Zermatt. Two years later she had progressed to climbing Monte Rosa, (the highest mountain in Switzerland) and the Breithorn, another 4000-metre peak.[162] It would be a distortion of the truth to suggest that all women who travelled to the Alps were caught up in an overwhelming desire to explore the remoter regions of the mountains; clearly some preferred less strenuous pastimes. The important point is that it was possible and relatively easy for

160 Taylor 1870, 22–23, 155.
161 Butler 1881.
162 "Josef Imboden Führerbüche." K21, AC. London.

women to explore the mountains *if they wanted to* and many took advantage of this opportunity.[163]

Those who walked and climbed clearly challenged the view of the feminine role put forward by Ruskin or Patmore and did not comply with etiquette guides advising 'ladies' not to be 'in the slightest degree bold'. Furthermore, mountain life did not lend itself to being overly particular about dress, food or calling cards. As outlined earlier, however, society was not monolithic. The developing cultural, and often contrasting, views in philosophy, literature and poetry, plus an increasing prominence of women in a number of different areas, including the Langham Place group, publicised the possibility of other 'ways of being'. These were more closely aligned to the lifestyles and activities of women who chose to explore the mountains.

Women climbers demonstrated, by their actions as well as their writing, how to live differently. As Mill remarked, things that were deemed 'unnatural' for women really 'only mean(t) not customary' and 'when anything is forbidden to women it is thought necessary to say and desirable to believe that they are incapable of doing it, that they depart from their real path of success and happiness.'[164] The latter was a line of argument used by some male mountaineers and many doctors when they advised women to take only moderate exercise – they were not built for it or it was against their 'nature'.[165] By contrast, the many women who extended their mountain excursions beyond the easiest stroll gradually realised what *they were capable* of. The confidence they derived from this enabled them to know that, far from being harmful or 'unnatural', mountaineering was normal and acceptable - and for some became a lifelong source of happiness.

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163 Hansen 1991, 45.
164 Mill 2008, 484, 525.
165 Martin Conway, "How to Climb the Alps," *Daily Chronicle*, December 30, 1893. Scrapbook, AC. London ; Weatherly 1882, 17. 29; Tilt 1851, 33.



Figure 18. The Sesia Joch, 2003, by Aleksander Gospic.[166]

Sisters Anna and Ellen Pigeon, particularly, demonstrate how confidence developed. Like Havergal and Taylor's group, they began with relatively simple walking excursions in 1863. These gradually became more extensive but never went above 3300m and mainly hovered around 2900m. In 1869, however, they clearly felt able to tackle a significantly higher target, the Lys Joch. At 4277 metres it was the highest they had ever been. This would have been a notable achievement in itself but, due to the guide's error, they descended an even higher and far more precipitous rock face that had been climbed only once and never before descended, the Sesia Joch (4424) Figure 18. On the descent, because the porter was so incompetent, one of the sisters went last on the rope; this spot is usually reserved for the most able in the group, as it is the position from which others are held if they fall.

This event made the Italian papers and even the Alpine Club took notice.[167] The episode, which could have ended in disaster, instead boosted the sisters' confidence – they had proven to themselves and others that they had great powers of endurance, cool heads and the skills to negotiate extreme terrain. Following this, their careers as serious mountaineers took off. As discussed in the following chapter, they became familiar faces in the high Alps and part of the

[166] http://www.summitpost.org/700m-high-south-face-of/116036.
[167] "Passage of the Sesia-Joch from Zermatt to Alagna by English Ladies," *The Alpine Journal,* 5, (1870a):96.

mountaineering community. They developed into committed and talented climbers, but crucially they had begun merely as women who enjoyed just walking and exploring. In subsequent years, the Pigeon sisters climbed most of the major summits and became members of the small group of women who were committed mountaineers. It is to that group I now turn.

Chapter 4. 'A Feverish Desire to Gain the Summit.'[1]

The Lives and Achievements of the Pioneers of Women's Mountaineering

> The wind was still howling and nipping our noses, ears and fingers pitilessly; but although there was no hope of a view, we *could* not give up our summit. It was with difficulty that we made our way along the summit ridge, trying, whenever we could, to keep below it. At length we reached the top at 1.10pm, the ascent having occupied 7 and a half hours.[2]

This was Meta Brevoort's description of reaching the summit of the Bietschorn (3934m) in the Bernese Alps, in July 1871. It was only the third ascent of the mountain and the first by a woman.[3] Brevoort was one of several women who shared, as Taylor's young friend, Minnie Neilson, described, 'a feverish desire to gain the summit,' and who spent weeks every summer attempting climbs on the more difficult or major Alpine peaks. Those who are the subject of this chapter came to climbing initially, like Havergal, Taylor and many other women, by simply extending their walking in the mountains. Unlike them, however, these women's sole intention was to climb the highest summits; they were committed, purposeful mountaineers, the pioneers of women's climbing.

This chapter considers the expeditions of these leading women climbers in detail.[4] It aims to give women a greater presence within the wider history of mountaineering, to place them in their own right rather than alongside, or as an appendage, to male mountaineering. Although climbing guidebooks routinely provide details of who made the first ascent, the first *woman* to climb the mountain is rarely recorded. There remains no collated account or recognition of women's first ascents. The appendix, to which this chapter refers, is an attempt to rectify this omission.

Only by considering the material detail of most of the leading women climber's expeditions can a sense be gained of how, in a relatively short space of time, women embraced serious mountain exploration; it enables the changes that

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[1] Five Ladies 2003, 95.
[2] Coolidge 1872, 120.
[3] Paillon 1899.
[4] See Appendix 3 for details of these women's climbing expeditions

occurred in the manner and style of mountaineering to be discerned. Furthermore, such a study gives some notion of the fervour, enthusiasm, even competitiveness, that existed amongst these dedicated alpinists. Finally detailed study of numerous expeditions demonstrates the acceptance, by a particular group of women, of the exertion, the mental and physical discipline, the privations and endurance demanded of climbers.

The occlusion of detailed accounts of female mountaineer's accomplishments from histories of sport and alpinism has contributed to women's physical use of their bodies also remaining largely unrecognised. By closely examining the expeditions of these elite climbers such physicality is highlighted and its importance to their success made explicit. It is an unapologetic account of women's alpinism from a woman's rather than a man's viewpoint.

The highest Alpine summits are at or above 4000 metres. Whilst height alone does not always correlate with difficulty, altitude makes physical activity significantly more demanding and exposure to adverse weather more likely. Progress becomes slower, breathing more rapid and the legs heavier – 350 to 400 metres ascent per hour is a reasonable rate above 2500 m and gets slower as the 4000-metre mark approaches.[5] Additionally, the greater distance from any habitation means carrying more food, drink and clothing. The classic Alpine routes or 'Grandes Courses,' which many climbers today aspire to follow, are commonly found amongst these 4000 metre peaks.[6] It was mountaineers in the second half of the nineteenth century who first created these routes.

Whereas men undertook most of these pioneering ascents, a number of women were also involved; it is this group of mountaineers that are the subject of this chapter. Some climbs were less than 4000 metres, but all, by virtue of their arduousness and status as 'virgin' peaks, were challenging. Appendix 1 contains details of these women's first ascents and shows that almost sixty of them were the first for either sex whilst over a hundred were first ascents for women. Some of these climbs were new routes on previously scaled mountains, others were

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[5] Cliff 1986, 38.
[6] Dumler and Burkhardt 1993; Goedeke 1991.

completely new peaks and several were first ascents in winter. The list shows the dominance of a few women who returned repeatedly to the mountains; indeed five women, Lucy Walker, Meta Brevoort, Katherine Richardson, Margaret Jackson and Elizabeth Le Blond, were responsible for over fifty new climbs. However, this should not overshadow the fact that many other women also climbed at altitude, even if they did not play as large a part in developing new and unprecedented routes. Appendix 2 shows how, in addition to those 37 female climbers in Appendix 1, around 120 women climbed many of the major Alpine 4000-metre peaks. The climbing lists of eight of the most prominent women mountaineers are in Appendix 3.

Whilst these appendices contain extensive information they have limitations and should not be regarded as an unchanging, definitive record. Several corrections were made in the course of my research and given that much information about women's climbing remains obscure, unknown and probably in private records it is possible further information may yet be revealed. Emily Hornby's account of her mountaineering, for example, was only noticed after her death and I have recently uncovered Elizabeth Spence-Watson's journal. It must be presumed many other diaries have been lost. Other source material is also patchy. For instance, the existing visitor's book for the Grand Mulets hut, only records the years 1861-1875. Not all the *führerbüche*r have survived and many women did not record or publicise their climbs. Nevertheless, the appendices represent both the best data available at the time of writing and the first attempt to collate women's early climbing records. Importantly, they underline the frequent presence of women on Europe's highest mountains in the last fifty years of the nineteenth century.

Climbing the remote and highest peaks, in that period, was generally more physically demanding than it is today. Modern mountaineers attempting many of these summits begin by taking a cable car, chair lift or train to around 3000 metres. Nineteenth-century mountaineers faced quite different circumstances; before they began their journeys over glaciers, rock faces or ice walls they had already spent several hours walking up from valley level. Anna Pigeon (1832-1917) aged seventy-six, recalled how a recent walk from Chamonix to

Montanvert, (a 900-metre climb), 'in the old days … was only the little beginning of an expedition;' now there is a train.[7] However, recent thinning of the glaciers has meant some nineteenth-century expeditions, once climbers were on the glacier, were easier than they are today as there was less rock or ice climbing to be done. In the nineteenth century, though, there were few high mountain huts to sleep in prior to the necessary early start for the summit. Nights were spent either in the open, in caves, or makeshift shelters. Where huts existed, they were small and usually without anyone to provide meals or maintain the building. All these factors made climbing more arduous and demanded a greater degree of commitment and privation than alpinists routinely experience today.[8]

Approaches to mountaineering were never static, however, and even in the early days there were gradual shifts in the style, goals, equipment and achievements. The analysis of women's climbing that follows, therefore, is divided into two sections, 1854 to 1876, and 1876 to the early 1900s. It begins in 1854 because this was when the first British woman, Mrs Hamilton, succeeded Henriette d'Angeville to become the third woman to climb Mont Blanc. By 1876, women had succeeded in climbing most Alpine summits and the first female mountaineers were approaching the end of their careers. The remaining years of the century still witnessed first ascents; these were mainly, but not exclusively, new routes on previously climbed mountains. This latter period also witnessed a change in the manner of mountaineering with a shift to guideless climbing, a greater number of women attempting higher peaks, and the inclusion of them as equals in otherwise all-male expeditions. Winter ascents also became more commonplace.

1. 1854-1876

In late August 1854, Mrs Hamilton and her husband were just the third successful party to climb Mont Blanc that summer.[9] As the season finished by the end of September, it was unlikely many others would make it to the top that year. The

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[7] "Letter to William Coolidge," Pigeon, March 19, 1909.

[8] Huts, guides and sleeping arrangements will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.

[8] Huts, guides and sleeping arrangements will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.

[9] A Tourist, "Letter to the Editor," Sept. 5, 1854.

mountain was not yet the focus it subsequently became. Just two years later, when Emma Foreman became the second British woman to climb the mountain, a *Times* editorial claimed Mont Blanc had become 'a positive nuisance'; ascents were so commonplace that the paper was besieged with accounts of climbs.[10] These were so numerous that the paper concluded there was little skill required or danger encountered in the ascent; it equated the experience with a cruise on the Rhine.[11] By 1860, however, after a number of accidents the same newspaper discussed how familiarity had bred contempt. Reversing its previous opinion, an editorial encouraged aspirant mountaineers to take precautions befitting a wild and unpredictable environment. In particular, they should have a sufficient number of experienced guides and develop a high level of fitness prior to the attempt. The Alps, it claimed, was an 'open air gymnasium' where importantly 'the English youth of *both sexes* (my italics) are encouraged to perform feats which elsewhere they would never think of attempting.'[12]

1.1 The First Women Climbers

Mathew Arnold 's sister, Jane Forster, and her husband William – later renowned for the 1870 Education Act – were caught up in this fervour for the mountains. From 1854 they made annual trips to the Alps. Although initially content with minor summits, in 1859 and 1860 they successfully climbed the two highest mountains in the Alps – Mont Blanc (4810) and Monte Rosa (4634).[13] This was one of the earliest female ascents of Monte Rosa; Emma Foreman had climbed it three years earlier, only two years after the first male ascent.[14] So began an unprecedented decade for women's climbing. Table 2 shows that every year from 1860-1870 a woman completed a first ascent, often more than one.

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10 Vallot, "Annuaire Du Club Alpin Francais," *Alpine Journal*, 14, (1888): 150-151.
11 "Mont Blanc Has Become a Positive Nuisance," *The Times,* October 6, 1856.
12 "The Close of This Week," *The Times*, August 29, 1860.
13 Mumm 1923.
14 Craig 2013, 56.

Table 2	FIRST ASCENTS 1860 -1870	BOLD:1ST ASCENTS FOR EITHER SEX
YEAR	MOUNTAIN	CLIMBER
1860	Strahlhorn (4190)	Lucy Walker
1861	Piz Tschierva (3546)	Fraulein Thea
	Col d'argentiere	**Emma Winkworth**
1862	Finsteraarhorn (4273)	Lucy Walker
1863	Zumstein spitze (4563)	Lucy Walker
1863	Jungfrau (4166)	Emma Winkworth
	Aletschhorn (4192)	Emma Winkworth
	Saurenjoch (2859)	Emma Winkworth
	Alphubel traverse (4206)	Emma Winkworth
1863	**Balfrin or Balinfirnhorn (3802)**	**Mrs Spence-Watson**
1864	Grand combin (4314)	Lucy Walker
	Eiger (3970)	Lucy Walker
	Rimpfischhorn(4199)	Lucy Walker
	Balmhorn(3698)	**Lucy Walker**
	Monte Viso (3841)	Alessandra Boarelli, Cecilia Filia
1865	Grivola (3969)	Lucy Walker
1866	Wetterhorn (3692)	Lucy Walker
	Weisshorn(4506)	Lucy Walker
	Dom (4545)	Lucy Walker
1867	Ortlerspitze (3905)	Mrs Spence Watson
	Schreckhorn (4080)	Lucy Walker
1868	Lyskamm (4538)	Lucy Walker
	Gross Viescherhorn (4025)	Lucy Walker
	Nesthorn (3903)	Meta Brevoort
1869	Piz bernina (4049)	Lucy walker
1869	Grandes-Jorasses (4208)	Meta Brevoort
1869	**Sesia Joch (4424)**	**Anna & Ellen Pigeon**
1870	Aiguille verte (4122)	Lucy walker
1870	**Meije Centrale (3974)**	**Meta Brevoort**
1870	**Aiguille de Moine (3412)**	**Mary Isabella Straton & Emmeline Lewis-Lloyd**

1.2 Lucy Walker

One name in this list, Lucy Walker (1835 -1916), is particularly recurrent. She was the first woman to climb regularly in the Alps and is the female climber

historians of mountaineering most commonly refer to.[15] She opened the way that many others followed. Coolidge claimed, 'She was a very remarkable woman to have climbed so steadily and so long! My Aunt (Miss Brevoort) would certainly never have started if Miss Walker had not set the example.'[16]

Between 1858 and 1879, Walker undertook 98 expeditions, missing only four seasons in twenty-one years (Appendix 3A). She climbed, with her brother or father, making thirty attempts on summits over 4000 metres and was successful on 28 of them. She accomplished at least sixteen first ascents for women and her ascent of the Balmhorn (3698) was the first for either sex. The well-known mountaineer Edward Whymper wrote, 'it is probably correct to say that no candidate for election to the Alpine Club has ever submitted a list of qualifications approaching the list of Miss Walker.'[17]

Walker demonstrated what women could achieve in the mountains. It is significant that Whymper's renowned 1864 engraving, 'The Club-room of Zermatt' (Figure 19), has Walker prominently positioned in the doorway of the Monte Rosa Hotel chatting to her friend and hostess, Madame Seiler. She is placed between the guides group on the right and the British male climbers on the left. It is almost a depiction of the existing social and class divisions. Whymper's comment on the picture, however, states it contained 'some of the most expert amateur mountaineers and guides' of the time – an acknowledgment that Walker, despite her sex, was one of the former.[18]

When a legend was produced for the engraving in 1893, she is not named but, by exclusion, her presence is arguably made more obvious. Bruce Hevly feels her anonymity reflects, to some degree, the presence of a male heroism that occurred both in mountaineering and science. Women because of their sex, he claims, were debarred from 'the experience of… understanding natural phenomena by physical exertion.'[19] While this might have applied to many

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[15] Engel 1950; Hansen 1991; Mazel 1994; Williams 1973.
[16] Gardiner, "In Memoriam. Miss Lucy Waker," *Alpine Journal*, 31, (1917): 98.
[17] Whymper, "Two Lady Climbers," *Girls Own Paper*, December 15, 1885.
[18] Whymper 1981, 110. *Scrambles Amongst the Alps* first published 1871.
[19] Hevly 1996, 84

women it could not be said of Walker who climbed more mountains than many men. Her omission from the key remains curious and open to debate.

Whymper had a high opinion of Walker and clearly made a conscious decision to include her in his hand drawn image: why if she was to be anonymous?[20] It is difficult to know the answer; possibly Walker, herself, did not want recognition. She wrote nothing about her illustrious climbing career, retreated into a more stereotypical female role when home in Liverpool and had to be cajoled in later life, by Coolidge and fellow climber Elizabeth Le Blond, to provide a record of her climbs. Alternatively, it is possible the decision was made by the publisher, or resulted from criticism by fellow climbers.

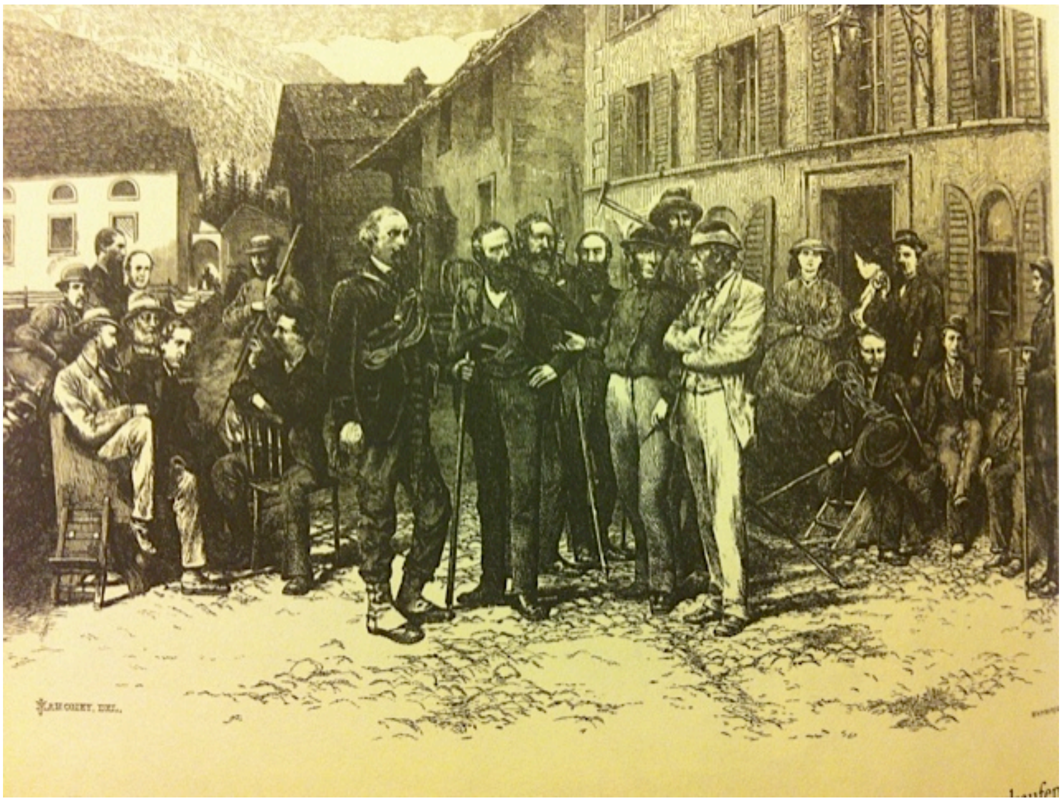


Figure 19. Edward Whymper's engraving, The Club-Room of Zermatt, 1864, depicting AC members, and guides. Lucy Walker and Cathrein Seiler are at the doorway of the Monte Rosa Hotel.[21]

This seems questionable, however, as the Walker family were active members of the mountaineering community; her father is pictured sitting on the left behind Leslie Stephen who has his foot resting on the stretcher of the chair. Moreover

[20] Whymper, "Two Lady Climbers," *Girls Own Paper*, December 15, 1885.
[21] Whymper 1981, 110. First published 1871.

Lucy was no firebrand virago who may have upset male sensitivities; apart from her climbing she appears to have been a conventional Victorian lady.[22]

This picture was created a year before the first ascent of the Matterhorn and six years before Walker herself attracted publicity by becoming the first woman to climb it. However, she had already established her credentials as a mountaineer. By 1864 she had climbed Monte Rosa and was the first woman on several other major summits - the Finsteraarhorn, the Strahlhorn and the Grand Combin - all over 4000m and considered 'grandes courses'. She had also climbed Mont Blanc and shortly after the picture was made became the first woman on another 4000m peak, the Rimpfischhorn.[23] She astounded the inhabitants of Wengen by being the first woman to climb the Eiger (3970m). An idea of the impact she made can be grasped from the journal of fellow climber and close family friend A W Moore (Fig.21), written after they returned from the summit of the Eiger.

> The astonishment amongst the people, [who] collected at the inn, at a lady having performed such an unusual feat, was immense and entertaining. One foreigner came into the Salle [sic] and seeing us announced, interrogatively, that 'Mademoiselle ' had gone to bed, and was profoundly amazed when we gave him to understand that mademoiselle was at the moment more anxious for dinner than for bed. [24]

Her presence also amazed the Belgian economist Emile de Laveleye when he encountered Walker in 1862 in the Theodule hut (3317), a refuge above Zermatt.

> We were extremely surprised when, creeping into this dark den we saw a young woman endeavouring to dry her garments, soaked with water and crisp with frost in front of a wretched fire. The guides told us she was a young English lady who travelled by herself. She was coming from the top of Mont Blanc and was going to the top of Monte Rosa; indeed she climbed that peak a few days later. Her name was Miss Walker. A moment later we saw her moving off. She had two guides…and a thick rope tied round her slender waist bound her to both hardy mountain natives. She was walking quickly, though floundering in the snow and she was soon out of sight, behind a thick mist and sheets of drizzle driven by the blizzard.[25]

Whilst the chronology of her climbs is incorrect and she was climbing with her brother and father rather than alone, the account nonetheless provides an

[22] Women climbers often led dual lives - a feature discussed more fully in chapter 6.
[23] Gardiner, "In Memoriam. Lucy Walker." *Alpine Journal,* 31, (1917): 97-102.
[24] Moore 1939, 2:354.
[25] Engel 1971, 136.

accurate impression of the difficulties frequently confronted in Alpine mountaineering.[26] Wet, heavy clothing, poor visibility, cold driving winds and soft snow into which the legs sink with every exhausting step made worse by the effects of altitude. The important point is that, despite these hostile conditions, Walker returned annually for twenty or more years to experience this high altitude environment with all the rewards and difficulties it offered. As will be seen others did similarly.



Figure 20. Lucy, with Mr Frank Walker. Guide Melchior Anderegg between A W Moore (right) and Frank Gardiner (left). (AC library)

The Walker family frequently had photographs taken 'in situ'. They were a more authentic memorialisation of their adventures than the more contrived popular studio pictures. Frank Walker's somewhat distant expression in Figure 20,

[26] See Appendix 3A for detailed dates of all Walker's ascents. She climbed Monte Rosa on July 15th and then went to Chamonix to attempt Mont Blanc.

however, makes this picture particularly poignant. Taken in 1871, possibly to mark Lucy's climb of the Matterhorn, within months her father had died.

Although Walker wrote nothing about her mountaineering she attracted publicity following her Matterhorn climb, a peak that gripped the public's attention after the tragic first ascent.[27] Despite the adverse reaction towards mountaineering that followed this event,[28] *Punch* printed a laudatory poem, rather than its usual satirical offering, in honour of this first ascent by a woman.[29] The actress, author and abolitionist, Fanny Kemble (1809-1893) also wrote a poem, 'Lines Addressed to Miss L.W,' in Temple Bar, a leading literary periodical.[30] These suggest that society could be open minded, even welcoming at times, to female climbers. Such recognition might have encouraged other women to be more adventurous on their trips to the Alps. Certainly, three of the most notable women climbers in later decades, Margaret Jackson, Katherine Richardson and Emily Hornby, began their enduring fascination with the mountains between 1871 and 1873, in the wake of Walker's Matterhorn ascent.



Figure 21. The Lyskamm, 2013.

[27] "Accident on the Matterhorn,"*The Times,* July 27, 1865.
[28] Several letters to *The Times* criticised the foolhardy & irresponsible notion of mountaineering following the Matterhorn deaths.
[29] "A Climbing Girl," *Punch*, August 26, 1871.
[30] Gardiner, "In Memoriam. Lucy Walker." *Alpine Journal,* 31, (1917): 97-102.

Although the Matterhorn was a great achievement some of Walker's other expeditions were equally, or more, challenging. For example, she climbed the notoriously dangerous Lyskamm (Figure 21) in 1868 with its 'vertiginous steepness', cornices and avalanches that 'cast [climbers] from the crest to the depths'. 'Few mountains,' an experienced twentieth-century mountaineer asserted, 'are as feared as the Liskamm[sic], which exudes an aura of horror'.[31] Similarly, the Aiguille Verte (4122), which she climbed in 1870, is recognised as being 'a peak of manifest difficulty … one of the most highly ranked four-thousanders.'[32] Figures 21 and 22 provide some indication of the exposed nature of these climbs.



Figure 22. The snow-capped Aiguille Verte, 2004.

Other years were also physically more exacting. In 1864, for example, Walker began by attempting the Grivola (3969), a mountain south of Mont Blanc. Three days later, she climbed the Grand Combin (4314), on the 'haute route' between Chamonix and Zermatt. This involved a long walk to the base of the mountain and was a two-day affair involving sleeping out on the hill. She continued her

[31] Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 113. In 1877 & 1896 two climbing parties were swept to their deaths by a collapsing cornice. Since then similar periodic tragedies have given the mountain a well-earned dangerous reputation.
[32] Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 174.

journey on foot to Zermatt, crossing three 3500-metre passes in the following three days. Two days after arriving in Zermatt, (when Whymper made his drawing) she climbed the Rimpfischhorn (4199), which she quickly followed with the Aletschhorn (4192). This ended an almost unbroken fortnight of successive climbs and long connecting treks, all at high altitude. Walker was not quite finished for the year though. A week later, she travelled north to the Bernese Alps to make first ascents of the Balmhorn (3698) and the Eiger (3970). This demanding itinerary amply demonstrates the strength, endurance, and level of fitness she possessed. While physical proficiency was essential to all successful mountaineers, it is not a quality commonly associated with women at this time.

In 1863, a letter to *The Times* made many aware of what climbing a 'grande course' summit involved.'[33] Emma Winkworth became the first female to climb the Jungfrau. In accomplishing this, readers learned how her party slept in a cave above the glacier, left in the early hours (1.30 a.m), climbed ice walls, negotiated crevasses and finally had to balance on an arête barely two feet wide before the summit was reached. The whole expedition lasted seventeen hours. If people were surprised a woman accomplished this, there was little public comment.

Emma's first experience of the Alps was two years before. On honeymoon with her husband Stephen Winkworth (1831-1886), a silk merchant and AC member, she climbed Mont Blanc and some other lower peaks. Winkworth climbed for just three years but during that time, in addition to the Jungfrau, also became the first woman to climb the Aletschhorn (4192) and traverse the Alphubel (4206) – both serious undertakings. Elizabeth Spence-Watson, also on her honeymoon, added another first for women in 1863 by climbing the Balfrin (3802).[34] With Walker's climb of the Zumsteinspitze (4563), women climbed five significant summits for the first time that year.

In the rest of the decade several women, as can be seen in Appendix 2 experienced the challenge of the high mountains. Spence Watson added another

[33] Utterson, "Jungfrau Conquered by an English Lady," *The Times,* August 20, 1863.
[34] Mumm 1923, 368; Spence Watson, "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," July 6th 1863.

first ascent, the Ortler (3905).[35] Mont Blanc, the Breithorn and Monte Rosa - all summits over 4000 metres – attracted people such as Mary Whitehead, Ellen Braudraw and Lady Libright. Only signatures or names in a guide's *Führebücher* or hut register remain to bear witness to these women, nothing else is known of them. This relative difficulty of uncovering female climbers has significantly contributed to them being largely excluded from histories of mountaineering; men are much easier to 'see.'

1.3 Meta Brevoort.

In the middle of the decade, however, a woman who not only became renowned within mountaineering, but also left a rich collection of correspondence, made her first significant climb in the Alps. Meta Brevoort, an American with Dutch ancestry, returned to Europe in 1864 with her sickly nephew, William Coolidge (1850-1936), and his equally frail mother. Brevoort became convinced mountain air would benefit him.[36] So began eleven years of regular climbing that was ended only by her untimely death in 1876.

Although Walker climbed for longer and over a larger area, Brevoort's annual campaigns encompassed more expeditions into unknown territory. In that sense, she was more adventurous than Walker. Moreover, whilst her nephew was young, the organisation, logistics, decision-making and leadership of tours were completely hers. By contrast, Walker's father shouldered these responsibilities, which until his death in 1872 allowed Lucy a more passive role. Accompanied by only a teenage boy, Brevoort was the driving force in the early years of her climbing. Without her Coolidge (fig.23), later editor of the *Alpine Journal* from 1880 to1889 and a significant presence within the climbing community, may never have been introduced to mountaineering.[37]

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[35] Beck 2011, 12

[36] Paillon, " Les Femmes Alpinistes. Miss Brevoort." *Annuaire de Club Alpin Francais*, 26 (1899): 276.

[37] Numerous letters in the William Coolidge Archive, Zentralbibliotech, Zurich detail Brevoort's pivotal organisational role.



Figure 23. From left to right, Christian Almer (guide), William Coolidge, Meta Brevoort & dog Tschingel, Ulrich Almer (Christian's son). 1874 (AC Library).

In contrast to Walker's photograph, Figure 23 is clearly a studio piece. As with most taken in this period the rope marks out the guide, while climbers are denoted by their alpenstocks. Porters, who were generally young or of a lower status, despite their essential role to the success of an expedition, were rarely included in these memorialising acts – something that reflects the prevailing social hierarchy.

Brevoort's Mont Blanc climb in October 1865 was her first major summit.[38] She went with Denise Sylvain-Couttet, wife of a Chamonix hotelier and owner of the Grand Mulets refuge. On the summit, they celebrated by dancing a quadrille and then all – guides and the women – sang the Marseillaise. French climber and writer, Mary Paillon, remarked how this remote spot was probably the only place in France, during the Second Empire, where this revolutionary song could be sung.[39] In the year that witnessed the end of the American Civil War this was Brevoort underlining both her staunch republican position and her success on top of the highest mountain in the Alps. Having witnessed slavery in South Carolina, she supported the North and befriended the antislavery novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe. Brevoort hated what she perceived as injustice or cruelty

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[38] Coolidge, "Letter To his Mother from Chamonix," October 2, 1865.
[39] The Marseillaise was composed in 1792 and became the anthem of the French Revolution. It was banned under Napoleon 3rd in the 2nd Empire, 1852-1870.

to either people or animals.[40] The singing of the illegal, banned, revolutionary song in the literally liberating space of the mountains is, perhaps, indicative of her political opinions.

Implicit within this dramatic celebration was also a rejection of any restrictions imposed on women; Brevoort was not a person to accept that mountaineering was just for men. Nevertheless, she was 'full of nervous apprehension' before meeting her new guide Christian Almer (fig. 23) for the 1868 season. Almer was a 'big gun' in the world of guides and Brevoort clearly had not made it known, in the correspondence arranging to engage him, that she was a woman. It was left to his son, Ulrich, to break 'the news of the "Dame" to him.'[41] Discovering the truth Almer was nonplussed, claiming he could assess Brevoort's abilities after a day's walk. Although Almer remained her guide for the rest of her climbing career, the relationship was often stormy – something that will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. The important point for the moment is that Brevoort was determined not to let gender stand in the way of securing one of the best guides available – even if it meant some initial subterfuge. She wanted someone who was prepared to open up new routes and lead her safely to many of the highest Alpine summits. Almer and his son fulfilled this role perfectly.

In 1867, the year before employing Almer, Brevoort allowed Coolidge his first attempt at a 4000-metre summit – the Jungfrau. This required a night at the primitive Faulberg cave, where Winkworth had been four years earlier, and several hours trekking up the Alestch glacier. The following day Brevoort was unwell and in a letter to her sister confessed,

> The Aletsch glacier had used me up on the previous afternoon. It is interminable and then the miserable night in the Faulberg & various other miseries I was suffering from & above all my poor thumping heart reminded me of my mortality.[42]

She waited alone on the glacier from 6.45 am until almost midday whilst their guide, Francois Devouassoud, took Coolidge to the summit. This was a desolate,

[40] Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes. Miss Brevoort." *Annuaire de Club Alpin Francais*, 26 (1899):. 280.
[41] Brevoort, "Meeting Almer," July 1, 1868c.
[42] Brevoort, "Letter to her sister after Jungfrau attempt," July 14 1867b.

cold place for such a prolonged and solitary stay. Her climbing career almost floundered before it had truly begun. She declared,

> I have come to the sad conclusion that I can't do grandes [sic] summits & painful marches & we have been remodelling our journey so that Willy may be able to accomplish all he wishes whilst I remain with him as much as possible...... my chief difficulty has been that heart of mine which grows worse and worse.[43]

This proved to be a significant over-reaction; only five days later she attempted the highest mountain in Switzerland, Monte Rosa. Unfortunately, she again failed but on this occasion adverse weather forced a retreat within metres of the summit.[44] These events provide a glimpse into the unpredictability of mountaineering, and the variety of issues, including health and fitness, women had to contend with and on which success depended. Brevoort, as leader of the group, was particularly self-sacrificial. Waiting for almost six hours alone on the barren, bleak glacier was typical of her approach. In later years when finances were low, and she felt the party would achieve more without her, she often remained behind in the village. Her letters depict the depressing loneliness of these occasions and the frustration she felt of not being on the mountain.[45]

Brevoort's natural habitat, however, was the mountain not the hotel. She achieved twelve first ascents for either sex, and fourteen for women. Appendix 3B contains a full list of her expeditions, which include 44 peaks, of which 16 were over 4000 metres, and 35 high passes. From 1869 until her death in 1876, she achieved more than one first ascent every year. In 1871, it was awareness of Brevoort's plan to be the first woman on the Matterhorn that provoked Walker to bring her own attempt forward.[46] This, in itself, indicates the community that existed amongst women climbers but also the unmistakable sense of competition. Brevoort was very aware of the summits that remained unclimbed and that Lucy Walker was her main rival. In 1868 upon learning Walker had climbed the Schreckhorn she wrote to her sister lamenting, 'I should not be the

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[43] ibid.
[44] Brevoort, "Letter to Sister from Zermatt," July 19, 1867c.
[45] Brevoort, "Alone in La Grave," July 17, 1874b.
[46] Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes," 1899, 289.

first even there you see!'[47] On another occasion she wrote that hearing Walker had successfully climbed the Aiguille Verte was 'a Grt[sic] blow.' In the same letter Brevoort almost rejoices that 'SHE (Walker) failed on the Dent Blanche & the others gave up going because she was "unwohl." The capitalisation and underlining denote the significance Brevoort associated with such an event; the following year she claimed the first female ascent of the Dent Blanche herself![48] Friendly rivalry and competition clearly was a significant, if not overriding, part of women's climbing.

Although Brevoort made many notable climbs in various parts of the Alps, including the first female *traverse* of the Matterhorn only days after Walker's first ascent, she had a special affection for the lesser-known Dauphiné region. It was an area regarded as relatively backward, compared to the tourist centres of Chamonix or Zermatt. The inns were dirty and food terrible. On one occasion, Brevoort had merely a sack of nuts to eat for two days.[49] It was the unexplored nature of the area and in particular its highest mountain, La Meije (3984) that drew her. As Coolidge wrote, compared to more popular areas of the Alps where most peaks had already been climbed, in the Dauphiné, 'There was all the world to explore and that was enough to attract us.'[50]

[47] Brevoort, "Meeting Almer," July 1, 1868a.
[48] Brevoort, "LW on Aig. Verte," July 22, 1870a.
[49] Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes," 1899, 286.
[50] ibid, 283.



Figure 24. The Meije. The Grand Pic is on the left; the Centrale is to the right of the middle block.[51]

Brevoort climbed the Meije in 1870 – arguably her finest achievement – but not quite to its highest point; the mountain has three summits. She was the first person, man or woman, on the Meije Centrale (3974 metres), but the Grand Pic de La Meije, a tooth-like shape that stands slightly apart from the main massif, as seen in figure 24, is nine metres higher. Even though it was an outstanding achievement, 'La deception fut grande' wrote Paillon when they later realised their mistake.[52] Due to its difficulty, the Meije was one of the last great Alpine peaks to be climbed, not succumbing for another seven years. It would be another seventeen before a woman made it to the summit. Brevoort retained hopes of climbing it all her life, but it was not to be. As some recompense she achieved other first ascents in the Dauphiné; two peaks, Pointe Brevoort and Pointe Margeurite, bear her name.

Brevoort, as mentioned earlier, became the first woman to climb the Bietschhorn (3934). She wrote an account for the *Alpine Journal* although, because her gender barred her from membership of the AC, submitted it under her nephew's name.[53] The expedition is a good illustration of the difficulties encountered on a mountain of this stature; it shows the necessity to remain flexible and phlegmatic.

51 http://www.summitpost.org/la-meije/5095.
52 Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes," 1899, 285.
53 ibid, 1899 291; Coolidge 1872.



Brevoort's party started below the left ridge, which they climbed to the top. They descended the ridge on the right before cutting back across the glacier hidden in the photograph by the foreground ridge.

Figure 25. The Bietschhorn[54]

Starting at 5.30 a.m, from a camp at over 3000 metres, Brevoort, Coolidge, the two Almers and one porter climbed the loose ridge where 'the rocks were very rotten, and fell down at the slightest touch.'[55] Because of this, the climb took longer than expected; it was over seven hours before they reached the summit, where Brevoort stoically declared,

> We could see nothing beyond the rocks immediately around us as we were enveloped in clouds, which the wind drove about tumultuously.

The biting cold and nasty conditions ensured they did not stay long on the top. To avoid the loose rock of the ascent they descended by another route. This, however, was equally demanding, with many unseen rock ridges. Cloud and fading light added to their problems, slowing their progress so much they arrived on the crevassed glacier in the dark of evening with the bitter 'wind whistling around.'[56] Attempting to retrace the path to their camp, Almer had to feel with his hands for the steps he had cut in the ice fourteen hours earlier. They were exhausted, very cold, and movement was slow. Almer, realising they would not make it to camp safely, led them to a cave seen earlier that morning. Here, where there was just space for five people, they stayed from 11.00 p.m until dawn at 5.00 a.m. with no food, drink or warmth and only the occasional lit

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[54] http://commons.wikimedia.org.
[55] Coolidge, "A Day and a Night on the Bietschhorn," *Alpine Journal*, 6, (1872): 120.
[56] ibid, 123.

match to check their watches. Hypothermia risked sending them into a fatal sleep that Almer prevented by 'jodelling in the most aggravating manner.' At first light, they descended to their tent an hour and half further down the mountain. They survived this 24-hour expedition but, as Brevoort noted, it had been 'an adventure which was not far from having a serious end.'[57]

Such an experience might have deterred many from further expeditions but the Bietschhorn 'adventure' was a fitting climax to what had already been an extraordinary year. In 1871, Brevoort achieved seven first ascents including new routes on the Jungfrau and the traverse of the Matterhorn. The scarcity of mountain huts meant, impromptu nights out on the mountain were not uncommon; few of the women climbers featured in this chapter avoided it – even if most managed something better than an ice cave.

1.4 Winter Climbing.

Brevoort's other claim to notoriety was the role she played in winter climbing. At this time it was frequently considered highly inadvisable if not impossible.[58] Leslie Stephen, for example, did not undertake any winter climbing until 1876/1877. Brevoort preceded him by a number of years. In January 1874 she made the first winter ascent of both the Wetterhorn (3692) and the Jungfrau (4166).[59] This attracted much attention from local press and some English papers.[60] Two years later, she tried to become the first person to climb Mont Blanc in winter. A dogged and determined attempt, she spent four nights at the Grand Mulets hut and another, incredibly, under canvas on the grand plateau 600m below the summit of Mont Blanc. This was a herculean effort but was to no avail; the weather triumphed. That same year she enjoyed one final summer of climbing before dying suddenly of rheumatic fever, in December. As the first woman to organise, participate and write about her regular Alpine exploration, she played an important part in inaugurating women's mountaineering. Despite

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57 Coolidge, "A Day and a Night on the Bietschhorn," *Alpine Journal*, 6, (1872): 124.
58 Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes," 1899, 289.
59 Coolidge, "The Wetterhorn & Jungfrau in Winter," *Alpine Journal*, 6, (1874): 405-14.
60 "Miscellaneous – News from Grindelwald," *York Herald,* February 7, 1874; Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes," 1899, 289.

the clear rivalry with Walker, her open nature and natural friendliness meant she became well known and liked within the wider climbing community. This is evident from the large number of letters to, or about her, in the Coolidge archive.

Only two weeks after Brevoort's failed Mont Blanc attempt, her friend, Mary Isabella Straton (1838 -1918), succeeded in becoming the first person to climb the mountain in winter. The expedition was not without mishap; Straton suffered frostbitten fingers, a porter was injured and it took four days at the Grand Mulets before they successfully made it to the top. Fellow mountaineers, Gabriel Loppé and Simon Eccles only days before had failed, like Brevoort, on the Grand Plateau.[61] In succeeding where many had failed, Straton became a local celebrity for a time.[62] The reporting of these events in British newspapers, however, provides some insight into the gender distortion surrounding mountaineering. Several papers covered the attempt by Loppé and Eccles; some even stating they reached the summit.[63] By contrast, none mention exactly the same bid made by Brevoort. Straton's successful expedition received far less coverage than Loppé's failed one and even these contained several inaccuracies.[64] It is a measure of Straton's independent nature that she would not let this stand. She wrote to *The Times* correcting these errors – a letter that was reprinted in several regional newspapers.[65]Nevertheless, this one incident demonstrates how men's mountaineering attracted far wider recognition than women's. Furthermore, it is a warning that newspaper reports, as a historical source, may be unreliable.

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61 Mathews, "The Growth of Mountaineering," *Alpine Journal*, 10 (1881): 259.

62 Straton remains a popular figure in Chamonix, where roads & hotels are named after her.

63 "Miscellaneous" *Belfast Newsletter,* Feb.8, 1876;"Scraps," *Graphic,* Feb.12, 1876; "Multim in Parvo," *Newcastle Courant* , Feb.11,1876; "Mont Blanc," *Pall Mall Gazette*, Feb. 4, 1876;

64 "Ascent of Mont Blanc by a Lady," *Bury & Norwich Post & Suffolk Herald*, Feb.22, 1876;"Ascent of Mont Blanc by a Lady," *Hull Packet & East Riding Times* , Feb.18, 1876; "Foreign Miscellany," *Liverpool Mercury* Feb.22,1876a.

65 Straton "A Lady's Ascent of Mont Blanc," *The Times*, March 2, 1876; "A Lady's Ascent of Mont Blanc," *Glasgow Herald, March 4,* 1876; "A Lady's Ascent of Mont Blanc," *Liverpool Mercury*, March 4,1876b.



Figure 26. Mary Isabella Straton (centre) and Emmeline Lewis Lloyd (left) with guides, late 1860s (Clarke 1953, 160).

Straton began serious mountaineering with Emmeline Lewis-Lloyd in 1865. They were the first to climb the Aiguille Moine in 1871 (3412). Lewis-Lloyd stopped climbing in 1873 but Straton continued. She is famous not only for her Mont Blanc ascent but also for eventually marrying her guide, Jean Charlet (1840-1925) in 1876. Aged 28 Straton had lost her wealthy parents and both sisters leaving Mary the sole heiress of around £4000 a year; Charlet was a shepherd and carpenter before becoming a mountain guide.[66] Possibly because of this liaison, which clearly challenged normal social divisions, they are pictured here (fig.26) unusually with porters as well as guides. Straton and Charlet made several first ascents. They took the opportunity of naming one summit Pointe Isabella (3761) and the other, Pointe de la Perseverance (2901), in recognition of their dogged determination in pursuing each other despite different social backgrounds. They settled in Argentiére, after their marriage. In Chamonix Straton is a celebrity; streets are named after her, as were mountain ridges and refuges. The Musée d'Alpin has a significant section dedicated to her

[66] Straton, Capt. Robert, "Last Will & Testament," 1850; Williams 1973, 58.

achievements.[67] By contrast historians of nineteenth-century mountaineering, in their written accounts as opposed to the materiality of museums, have largely neglected her.[68]

1.5 The Clapham Sisters.

One of the purposes of this chapter is to focus on the neglected or undiscovered mountaineering achievements of women, like Straton, that are often ignored by histories of general mountaineering. Women were not appendages to the development of climbing and exploring the Alps but contributors in their own right. These pioneering women mountaineers opened up all the Alps, not just the lower reaches, for the female half of the population to experience. In doing so women occasionally, like Straton, achieved things in advance of men.

Anna and Ellen Pigeon, two sisters from Clapham, whose gradual development from walkers into serious mountaineers was discussed in the previous chapter, have attracted some attention from historians.[69]These accounts, however, are mainly limited to their publicised Sesia Joch descent and lack any detail of the sister's subsequent climbing career. Moreover, they suggest 1869 was the sister's first experience of the Alps whereas, in reality, they had toured regularly for the preceding five years. In 1867, for example, they climbed to the Grands Mulets on Mont Blanc and the previous year scaled the Mettelhorn (3406) and attempted the Tête Blanche (3750), an outing that lasted 19 hours and crossed two passes over 3000m.[70]

In the five years after their unprecedented descent of the Sesia Joch their mountaineering increased in both intensity and difficulty. They climbed a minimum of four 4000-metre peaks every season; previously they had undertaken none. In the same year as their descent of the Sesia Joch they climbed the Breithorn (4164) and also attempted the more difficult Aiguille Verte (4122). During their climbing career, they completed forty-three 'grandes courses' and

[67] By contrast, most British historians of mountaineering, do not mention Straton's Mont Blanc climb.
[68] Clark 1953; Hansen 1991; Ring 2000
[69] Craig 2013, 93; Williams 1973, 46–49.
[70] Pigeon 1885, 24, 28.

managed two first ascents; they were the first women to traverse the Matterhorn (4487) from Italy to Zermatt in 1873 and they pioneered a new route over the Moming Pass (3745) in 1872. The sisters always climbed together but used a variety of guides depending on year and location. In 1874 they climbed Mont Blanc by a more unusual route from Courmayeur that had been created only two years previously.[71] It involved an initial six-hour walk, a night bivouacked above the glacier, followed by a climb of eight hours to the summit and a further four to five hours descent to the Grands Mulets refuge; clearly a far more demanding route than usual.

1874 was one of the sister's most memorable years. After this Mont Blanc climb, they attempted the Aiguille Verte again before walking from Chamonix to Zermatt by a series of high passes. This is the popular 'haute route' followed by many keen hikers today, who typically take between 10 to 14 days over it. The Pigeon sisters arrived in Zermatt after eight days and en route climbed the Pigne d'Arolla (3796). In the following two weeks they climbed eight mountains, all over 4000 metres – Zinal Rothorn (4221), Breithorn (4164), Monte Rosa (4634), Obergabelhorn (4073), Castor (4230), Pollux (4092), Weisshorn (4506) and the Matterhorn (4478) for the second time.[72] Only the weather prevented them continuing to the Dent Blanche (4364) the next day. This was a schedule that would stretch many climbers in the twenty-first century even with the benefits of lightweight equipment and modern transportation systems. This formidable itinerary highlights their outstanding fitness, confidence and ability as mountaineers. It demonstrates their physical and mental endurance; qualities that were drawn out of them by the surrounding environment of long snowfield ascents, crevasses, ice walls, boulder-fields and narrow Alpine ridges. The terrain mapped itself onto a person's physique, demanding the body function at or near the peak of its abilities. This phenomenological rapport - which will be discussed more fully in the following chapter – occurred at a time when it is often assumed women were forbidden or avoided such activities.

[71] Collomb and O'Connor 1976, 1:84.
[72] See Appendix for dates and heights

The Pigeon sisters were purposeful, focussed and went about their business with the minimum of fuss, they disliked hyperbole and embellishment. Their unpretentious style is evident when commenting on Whymper's well-known book *Scrambles Amongst The Alps* (1871) that detailed his first ascent of the Matterhorn,

> 'I think,' wrote Anna, 'he exaggerated the difficulties of the Matterhorn - had I read that account before we had been up...I should have said such an ascent is beyond our powers, we should fail. Of course the weather has much to do with mountaineering - We had bad weather when we took the route from Breuil to Zermatt & the snowfall made the descent difficult. Still it was accomplished satisfactorily with the exception of some frost bitten fingers!' [73]

For many people the achievement of being the first women to undertake a new route on a mountain such as the Matterhorn - experiencing snowstorms and frostbite in the process – would have been reason enough for self-congratulation, even a little bragging. For the Pigeon sisters it was merely a 'satisfactory' result. Furthermore, although the letter alludes to poor weather, it does not mention it forced them to spend the night on the open mountainside in a storm.[74]

Their privately published booklet *Peaks and Passes* (1885) is similarly succinct; there are no embellishments. Its Spartan style recounts details of expeditions from 1869 to 1876; other years are covered even more briefly. It provides excellent insight, however, into the structure, logistics and difficulties of a summer mountaineering tour, complete with lost luggage, church attendance, sleeping arrangements and difficulties with guides; all things that are rarely given any priority in men's mountaineering accounts. Particularly interesting are the hours of walking and travelling involved when moving from valley to valley, which highlights the fitness of these women. A précised version is in Appendix 3C.

In August 1869, for example, they spent eight hours in a diligence (public coach), followed immediately by a six-hour walk of just under twenty miles with over

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[73] Pigeon, "Letter to William Coolidge," March 19, 1909.
[74] Whymper 1900, 427.

1000 metres ascent. In 1876, they walked five hours from Grindelwald to a cave to spend the night. The following day they climbed the difficult Schreckhorn (4080) and returned to Grindelwald (1034). The next day they did not rest but walked to Kleine Scheidegg (2061) - approximately three miles and 1000 metres ascent – to climb the Eiger (3970) the following day and return to Grindelwald.[75] This is an itinerary that only the fittest of people could entertain, but as Anna Pigeon was to remark in later life, she had always 'so loved walking.'[76] A fondness for exercise and marked athletic ability were clearly innate to Anna and her sister. Discovering demanding mountaineering clearly provided an outlet and expression for this natural bent.

The end of the 1860s and first half of the 1870s witnessed regular Alpine expeditions, not only by Walker, Brevoort, Straton and the Pigeon sisters but by women such as Madame Millot and Mrs Alston Bishop with their respective husbands. Numerous letters show the sense of comradeship and fun that existed between these women; they met up whenever possible, swapping experiences of guides, excursions and equipment.[77] Women were a frequent sight amongst the high Alps. Millicent Fawcett, the suffragist, climbed Monte Rosa in 1872 but without her blind husband who 'was in a fever of anxiety during every hour of [her] absence.'[78] Mont Blanc continued to attract its adventurers (Appendix 2) and The Engadine, in Eastern Switzerland, gradually became more popular as seen in tours made by the Plunkett sisters and Mary Taylor.[79] By the end of 1876 however Brevoort was dead, Walker climbed for just three more years and Ellen Pigeon's marriage broke up the sister's climbing partnership.

2. 1876-1900

From 1876 a gradual change began in the way some women climbed. Unlike Walker, Straton, Brevoort or the Pigeon sisters, women were beginning to climb

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[75] Pigeon 1885, 8, 22.
[76] Pigeon "Letter to William Coolidge," March 19, 1909.
[77] Abbott (nee Pigeon), "Letter to William Coolidge", Dec.19, 1900; Brevoort, "Meeting of Women Climbers," Sept.13 1874a; Brevoort, "Meeting the Pigeons," Sept.13, 1872b; Brevoort,"News of LW 's Diptheria," July 25, 1872a; Brevoort, "Plunketts, Hornby all at or near Zermatt," July 24, 1876; Brevoort, "Return from Dauphine," July 11, 1870b; Straton, "Photo of Tschingel," Nov. 20, 1875.
[78] Fawcett 1924, 103.
[79] Plunket 1875.

alone without any accompanying female or male friend or relation. This became increasingly common as the century progressed, as seen in the climbing of Katherine Richardson, Beatrice Tomasson, Lily Bristow and Gertrude Bell. Emily Hornby (1834-1906), however, is the first on record to climb in this manner. This is significant because it appears in stark contrast to expected behaviour for most women of her class.[80] Havergal, for example in 1871, when a friend did not arrive as expected in Zermatt to accompany her on a climb, reassured her sister she was 'not so demented as to go without a lady companion.'[81] Hornby, however, does not appear concerned with being a solitary woman. Indeed, she seemed to enjoy isolation, even dispensing with her guide on occasions. She often sent him ahead so she could walk alone or enjoy a 'most delicious wade' in a nearby lake.[82]

2.1 Single Minded.

Hornby climbed for over twenty-three years, beginning in 1873. She stood on fourteen summits over 4000m including not only Mont Blanc (4810), Monte Rosa (4634m), but also the Eiger (3970m) and Jungfrau(4158m). She was the eighth lady to climb the Matterhorn (4,478m), the third to reach the top of the Dent Blanche (4356m)[83] and the first woman to climb Mont Pourris (3779m) and traverse the Grand Paradiso (4061m).[84] Appendix 3E contains her full climbing record.

When climbing the Jungfrau and Finsteraarhorn, she stayed in the tiny, remote Faulberg hut (2850m), which replaced the cave used earlier by Brevoort and Winkworth (see map, figure 27). [85] She was alarmed to 'hear the click of alpenstocks' and see 'a file of about a dozen winding over the glacier to share this very small hut.' It was, in fact, only half that number, three men and their guides. Despite these initial concerns and the cramped conditions, a convivial evening

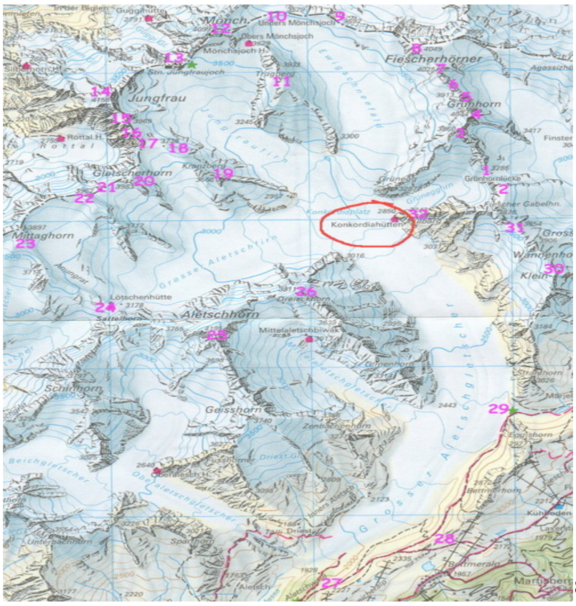
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80 "Here and There Among the Alps," *Saturday Review*, 39, (1875): 291-292, voiced disapproval of women sharing cramped mountain huts but simultaneously, and paradoxically, encouraged women to climb several of the major summits; one is impossible without the other.
81 Crane 1881, 131.
82 Hornby 1907, 20.
83 Hornby 1907, 6–8.
84 Hornby 1907, 15–16.
85 The hut was built in 1876 near to the Faulberg Cave used by Winkworth and Brevoort. It was replaced in 1898 by what is now called the Konkordia hut.

was spent together. We 'combined [our] portable soups and made a very good strengthening brew,' Hornby recalled.[86] As on other occasions, in July 1876, she was the only woman amongst the nine people that spent the night in the hut: the following day both parties climbed the Finsteraarhorn (4274). Ahead of her on the final summit ridge the men called down that, due to fog and 'fearful cold', she should turn back.

> 'As if it was likely,' wrote Hornby, 'when I had just got through the toil and had come to the interesting part, and we were only about half an hour from the top. They were most easy rocks, and never seemed precipitous, and they were interspersed with short easy bits of snow. I never was in the least cold – never even put on my jacket till we were quite at the top; and one of them told me next morning at breakfast his feet were frozen in his boots.'[87]

Clearly dismissive of these men's recommendations, she also seems to enjoy the notion that she dealt with the mountain as, or more, competently than they did. Independent, forthright and self-possessed, she knew her capabilities, had the desire of most mountaineers to gain the summit and would do everything possible to achieve it; cold and fog were certainly no deterrent.



[88]

Figure 27. Aletsch Glacier and surrounding mountains, showing location of Konkordia hut which replaced the Faulberg hut.

[86] Hornby 1907, 10.
[87] Hornby 1907, 11.
[88] www.summitpost.org/konkordia-hut/266112

Unlike the Pigeon sisters, who travelled at a brisk pace, Hornby is interesting because she recognised, but phlegmatically accepted, she was naturally slow. Her journal makes constant references to being behind guidebook times on various routes.[89] Later, in 1890, when accompanied by five female cousins and her sister on a six-week tour, which in itself demonstrates the commonplace presence of women in the mountains, she wrote,

> I very soon fell into my usual position of the last of the party, and enjoyed myself very much, I cannot bear to feel anybody close on my heels.[90]

She did not allow slowness to impede her realising what she lacked in speed she made up for in determination and endurance.[91] Her attempt to climb the Dom (4545) illustrates this. She knew the climb 'to be long and tiresome but of no particular difficulty.'[92] There was no hut to stay in; climbers bivouacked at 'the sleeping place', which was in a similar position to the current hut, seen in Figure 28, a six-hour walk from the village of Randa (1500).



Figure 28. The Dom Hut.[93]

At 2940m, it meant an uncomfortable night not just because of the cold and exposure at this height, but altitude commonly made sleeping fitful. Hornby's

[89] Hornby 1907, 5, 17, 43.
[90] Hornby 1907, 48.
[91] Hornby 1907, 165.
[92] Hornby 1907, 14.
[93] www.domhuette.ch/willkommen.html.

attempt on the Dom failed within three hours of the summit, which meant another night in the open. The following day, starting at 4.30 a.m, she returned to the village. That evening after spending three days and two nights on a mountain she failed to climb, involving over 2500 metres of ascent and descent, rather than falling into bed, she felt 'obliged to go [to a concert] as the proceeds are to be given to the poor.'[94] Stamina and endurance she had in plenty even if pace was lacking.

Hornby's candid admission of slowness stands in stark contrast to most men's mountaineering accounts, which rarely confess such shortcomings.
Hornby and the Pigeon sisters differing pace highlight the varied abilities of women mountaineers. There were many ways to be a successful climber but they all had – or developed in the course of their mountaineering – an intimate knowledge of their own, individual abilities and deficiencies. This self-understanding was essential if any degree of success was to be achieved.

2.2 Jackson and Richardson – Pioneering Ascents.

Hornby is important within the history of women's mountaineering because she is the first on record to climb alone. Margaret Jackson and Katherine Richardson, however, are equally significant because they both pioneered difficult new routes that were the first for either sex not just for women. No female before them had created so many entirely new climbs in advance of their male counterparts. Walker had initiated women's mountaineering in the 1860s but largely followed existing routes developed by men; Jackson and Richardson, from the late 1870s to the 1890s, took it to a new level of technical difficulty.

Margaret Jackson (1843-1906) began her serious climbing in 1876 at the same time as Hornby, even on occasions using the same guide, Aloys Pollinger.[95] She became a significant personality within the whole mountaineering community, male or female.[96] Her importance to the history of women's mountaineering, however, reaches beyond this. As far as existing records show, she achieved

94 Hornby 1907, 15.
95 "Alloys Pollinger Führerbüche" 1873.
96 Paillon, "En Souvenir - Mrs E. P. Jackson," *La Montagne* 2 (1906): 582.

more first ascents of 4000 metre peaks – that is the first for anyone irrespective of sex – than any other woman in the nineteenth century.



Figure 29. Margaret and Edward Jackson, 1870s. Unknown location (AC Library)

Her slightly coy pose in figure 29, beside the dominant figure of her husband, belies the force of character she evidently had. Jackson climbed with her husband, Edward, a merchant and colliery owner, from 1872 until his death in 1881. This did not stop her climbing however; mountaineering was something she enjoyed of her own accord not merely to accompany her husband. She accomplished over 140 'grandes courses' including four first ascents for either sex, and was the first woman to climb the Grand Dru (3754) and Grand Charmoz (3445) as seen in figure 33.[97] The full list of her climbs has not survived but Appendix 3D details her major expeditions. Her first notable climb was the first ascent of the 'loose and dangerous East face' of the Weissmies.[98] Such an experience might have deterred attempts on other untried or dangerous routes but the following year she climbed the Lyskamm, and two years later was the first to descend the west ridge of the Dent Blanche. That same year three climbers were killed on the mountain, an event that prompted Queen Victoria to

[97] Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 62, 73, 146; Mumm 1923.
[98] Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 62.

write to Gladstone expressing her disapproval of these ‘dangerous Alpine excursions’.[99] Jackson appears to have been undeterred by this tragedy.

Jackson is particularly renowned for continuing what Brevoort and Straton had begun - women's role in winter climbing. In January 1888, she was the first person to climb the Lauteraarhorn (4042) and quickly followed this with the Gross Fiescherhorn (4048) and traverse of the Jungfrau (4158). These expeditions were not without difficulty however. The weather, unsurprisingly in winter, affected her plans causing an initial retreat from the Jungfrau. Jackson's frustration provides a glimpse of how the mountains, despite the perceived social constraints visited on women, could become addictive.

> ‘It was certainly a black moment in my life’, she wrote, ‘When I was asked how we fared, and had to answer that we had failed. I could not rest; disappointment on the Jungfrau was forever in my mind.’[100]

Within a few days, she renewed her attack and this time was successful. Her party, however, was benighted and she suffered severe frostbite that ended her climbing career. It was,

> ‘a difficult feat at any time,’ remarked Coolidge, ‘and in winter more so than ever from the necessity of passing a second night somewhere on the mountain. Her party spent it in a crevasse and were frost-bitten, notwithstanding which the expedition must always rank as one of the most splendid ever achieved in winter.’[101]

This acknowledgment in the 1888 *Alpine Journal,* together with the article Jackson wrote for the magazine of her expedition, hints at the change in attitude to women's mountaineering since Brevoort's submission under her nephew's name in 1872.[102] Jackson is also the only woman who has an entry in Mumm's register of AC members; an indication of the respect many fellow male mountaineers had for her.[103]

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99 Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 145.
100 Jackson, "A Winter Quartette," *Alpine Journal* 14 (1889): 207.
101 Coolidge, "Alpine Notes - Women's Expeditions," *Alpine Journal*, 14 (1888a) 162.
102 Jackson, "A Winter Quartette," 1889: 200-210.
103 Mumm 1923, Vol. 2, 203.

Katherine Richardson (1854-1927) was a slightly younger contemporary of Jackson. She is important because, even amongst this set of committed mountaineers, she was exceptionally fast, a true athlete. One guide observed ruefully, 'She does not sleep, she doesn't eat and she walks like the devil.'[104] On more than one occasion, she had to wait whilst her guide took a rest.[105] Also, like Jackson, Richardson achieved new routes where many men had previously failed. Consequently, she was highly regarded as a talented mountaineer by both male and female climbers.

Richardson was the daughter of a Yorkshire clergyman, the second of five sisters, one of whom, Fanny, also climbed but at a lower level than her sister and not as consistently.[106] 'Katie' began climbing in eastern Switzerland in 1871, but it was 1879 before she accomplished her first unprecedented route – the first person, male or female, to traverse the three summits of Piz Palu (3901). By the time she stopped climbing major peaks, in 1897, she had 116 'grandes courses' to her name.[107]

Like Hornby, until she met Mary Paillon in 1888, Richardson climbed alone without a friend or relative. Unlike Hornby, however, her speed opened up new ways of climbing. The ability to move quickly often meant escaping bad weather, gaining the safety of a refuge sooner and avoiding impromptu bivouacs. Fellow climber Gertrude Bell recognised 'that quick going is half the battle in mountaineering.'[108]

[104] Dronsart 1894; Nash, "A Day and a Night on the Aiguille Dru," *Temple Bar*, 88, (1890): 497.
[105] Le Blond 1928; Coolidge, "Aiguille de Bionassay First Ever High Level Traverse," *Alpine Journal*, 14 (1888b): 150.
[106] Nash "A Day and a Night on the Aiguille Dru," Temple Bar, 88 (1890).
[107] Paillon, "Miss K. Richardson," *La Montagne*, 23, (1927): 326–323.
[108] "Gertrude Bell Archive - Newcastle University" 2012.



Figure 30. Katherine Richardson in front of Balmat & Saussure's statue, Chamonix. Flanked by guides Emile Rey and Jean Baptiste Bich, 1890. (Paillon, 326).

After Richardson's ascent of the Meije in 1888, which she was the first woman to climb, *The Morning Post* called her 'one of the most rapid climbers ever known.'[109] She was the first, man or woman, to begin the climb from the nearby village, La Berarde; normally climbers started from a bivouac half way up the mountain.[110] Immediately following this, she traversed the Ecrins (4102) – again for the first time without bivouacking.

Amongst her first ascents, the climb along the Aiguille de Bionnassay ridge was one of the most impressive achievements in women's mountaineering in the nineteenth century. Figure 31 shows the extremely narrow, knife-edged, ridge with large drops either side. Many men had attempted it, but as Coolidge wrote,

> It had been reserved for a lady to accomplish the traverse of an arête which had hitherto been found impracticable.[111]

Due to the 'delicate' nature of the ridge, they crossed it 'au cheval', i.e astride. The 1888 *Alpine Journal* acknowledged Richardson's achievement claiming, 'These

109 "Mountaineering in 1888," *The Morning Post* , December 31,1888.
110 Coolidge, "Alpine Notes - Women's Expeditions," *Alpine Journal*, 14 (1888a): 163.
111 Coolidge, "Aiguille de Bionassay First Ever High Level Traverse," *Alpine Journal*, 14, (1888b):150.

three events [The Meije, Ecrins & Aiguille de Bionnassay] are perhaps the most noteworthy events of the past season.'[112]



Figure 31. Aiguille de Bionnassay.[113]

This was high praise and recognition from an organisation that excluded women and contained some members, like Leslie Stephen and Martin Conway, who doubted the appropriateness of climbing for 'ladies'; the latter wrote, 'I'm rather afraid mountaineering is not well suited to women, or they to it.'[114]

The following year Richardson again attracted attention with three more first ascents; in particular her climb of both peaks of the Dru. This entailed two parties on the mountain climbing simultaneously, but each heading in opposite directions. The other all-male party was delayed and had to spend the night on the mountain. Richardson returned to the inn that evening, but it had been a long

112 Coolidge, "Alpine Notes - Womens Expeditions," *Alpine Journal*, 14 (1888a): 163.
113 http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aiguille_du_Bionnassay.jpg.
114 Conway, "How to Climb the Alps," *Daily Chronicle*, December 30, 1893.

22-hour day.[115] Her agility and technique as a rock climber prompted guide, Michel Payot, to claim 'She slides over the rocks like a lizard.'[116]

Richardson has an important place within this history of women's mountaineering not only because of her unprecedented climbs and extreme athleticism but also because, as shown on the Dru, of her close connections with leading male climbers and public recognition by them. She powerfully shows how the mountaineering community in the 1880s was more inclusive and accepting of women than is often presented. Richardson, like Jackson, demonstrates women were not always followers but occasionally became leaders, creating new routes.

Whilst Richardson's athleticism and strength challenged the perception of women's capabilities in the mountains, the mountains in turn affected the way her life unravelled. After climbing the Meije she met Mary Paillon, which developed into an abiding friendship. Richardson lived with Paillon, at her family's house near Lyons, for over thirty years until her death in 1927. In honour of her contribution to mountaineering Paillon's brother, Maurice, named a peak in the Dauphiné Pointe Richardson.[117] Fittingly it overlooked the Meije and Richardson's last major climb, Mont Pelvoux.

2.3 Growing Confidence.

Amongst the women who climbed from the early 1880s to the turn of the century it is possible to detect a growing shift in attitude and approach from the early days of Winkworth, Spence-Watson and Walker. While it is difficult to be precise about the nature of that difference it is probably best encapsulated by their greater preparedness to publicise their activities, to be less concerned by appearances than their predecessors and less restricted by social protocols. They appear socially bolder and more self-confident.

115 Coolidge,"Both Peaks of the Aiguille Dru on the Same Day," *Alpine Journal* 14 (1889b) 522-523; Nash " A Day and Night on the Aiguille Dru," *Temple Bar*, 88, (1890): 497.
116 Nash, ibid,; Dronsart 1894.
117 Paillon, "Miss K Richardson" *La Montagne*, 2 (1927): 332.

A prime example is, Elizabeth Hawkins-Whitshed (1861-1934). A contemporary of Richardson, she was the first woman to develop more widespread notoriety for her climbing and women mountaineers in general. This was first because 'Lizzie', who was married three times, becoming in turn Mrs Burnaby, Mrs Main and Mrs Le Blond (the name by which she is largely known), was independently wealthy and, coming from Irish aristocracy, moved in higher social circles than most other female mountaineers. After marriage to her first husband Col. Fred Burnaby she apparently became part of the Prince of Wales' social scene.

Secondly, unlike many women, she wrote publicly about her experiences. Beginning with her first trip to the Alps in 1882, she continued publishing books until the end of her climbing career in Norway at the end of the century.[118] She was very active within women's mountaineering, encouraging others through her writing and became a founder member and first president of the Ladies Alpine Club (LAC) when it was formed in 1907. Le Blond was also a lively member of the wider mountaineering community, where her skills as a keen photographer were often called for.[119] Martin Conway, for example, a president of the AC, despite his derogatory remarks about women as mountaineers, asked her to take photographs for a forthcoming article he was writing for the AC journal. Le Blond also contributed a chapter about climbing in the Engadine for a guidebook Coolidge was editing.[120] Unlike earlier women such as Walker, Le Blond did not avoid publicity.

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[118] Le Blond 1928; Le Blond 1908; Le Blond 1883; Le Blond 1903; Burnaby 1886; Main 1892

[119] see http://safarimuseum.com/gallery/ which houses a collection of over 2000 of Le Blond's photographs

[120] Conway, "Letter to William Coolidge," Sept.8, 1886b; Main, "Engadine Guidebook," June 10, 1890.



Figure 32. Elizabeth Le Blond with guide Martin Schocher, 1898, Climbing Piz Palu in Winter. Note the snow shoes; winter climbing required even more equipment than usual.(AC Library)

In 1879, ill health, thought to be verging on consumption, resulted in her travelling to the mountains to recuperate.[121]Although doctors advised the warmth of Algiers, she was convinced the cold of the alpine winter was better and went on to proselytise such beliefs.[122] As other women had experienced, it was an initial, almost serendipitous excursion into the mountains that revealed new opportunities, explorations and possibilities, which hitherto had lain concealed. In 1881 she was staying in Chamonix.

> I arrived in bad health. As for mountaineering I knew nothing and cared less. However, after a fortnight in the fresh mountain air I was induced by some friends to accompany them to Pierrepointue. The weather was fine the glacier above looked inviting and Miss H—and I continued to the

[121] E.L.S,"In Memoriam, Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell," *Alpine Journal*, 38 (1934): 383.
[122] Le Blond 1883, 185–187.

> Grand Mulets. The excursion did not tire me and a week later I returned there to ascend Mont Blanc.[123]

The account is written in such a casual style that it obscures the fitness needed even to walk to Pierrepointue and particularly to climb to the Grands Mulets. Her first attempt on the mountain failed because of the weather, but the following summer saw her 'once more installed in my old quarters at the Hotel d'Angleterres.' Before long, 'the desire to 'go up something grew too strong to be resisted.' She claims she 'did nothing worthy of note' but that summer saw her cross the Col de Geant (3371m) and return to Chamonix via Mont Blanc (4810). Two weeks later she climbed the Grand Jorasses (4208m), and before the season's end also stood atop the Aiguilles de Tacul (3444m) and Belvedere (2965m) – all mountains within the Mont Blanc massif.[124] Not an inconsiderable accomplishment at any time but particularly for a first season, as Whymper noted.[125]

She climbed from 1882 to 1903 (see Appendix 3G) during which period she scaled thirty-seven 4000-metre peaks, thirty-two other 'grandes courses' and managed ten first ascents. Le Blond, however, is particularly renowned for winter climbing as seen in Figure 32. She began almost immediately after her first visit to the mountains in 1882/3. She continued the tradition of women's involvement in this particular aspect of mountaineering that Brevoort and Straton started in 1876. Within a year of knowing 'nothing and care[ing] less' about mountaineering she became an accustomed sight in the Alps, throughout the year. For Le Blond, like Richardson, the mountains became a major part of her life. She was a familiar figure in St Moritz where she kept a suite of rooms at the Kulm Hotel from 1886 to 1900. Here she also enjoyed other winter sports such as skating and the luge.

Although Whymper's scepticism of Le Blond's credentials as a consumptive was undoubtedly correct, he nevertheless pointed out that she attempted, and often succeeded, on 'summits which even in summer time are often found to tax the

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123 Le Blond 1883, v.
124 Le Blond 1883, vi.
125 Whymper, "Two Lady Alpine Climbers," December 15, (1885): 164.

energies of robust men.'[126] This ability, together with a well-developed sense of self-belief, gave her confidence to make the first female expedition without any men or guides in the party. In 1892, she made the first ascent for the season of, arguably her favourite mountain, Piz Palu (3901) with only Lady Evelyn McDonnell, another Irish aristocrat, as company.[127]

2.4 Guideless.

From around 1890 there were further subtle shifts in the style of women's climbing; mountaineering without guides, for example, became more common. Although Mont Blanc was first climbed without a guide as early as 1855, and men such as Arthur Girdlestone climbed extensively without guides in the 1860s, it remained AC policy to advocate guides for everyone.[128] Nevertheless, despite support of the AC's stance by men like Stephen, Freshfield and Wills, during the 1870s an increasing number of men climbed without guides and vociferously defended their actions.[129] This was partly because of expense but more often because of the freedom it gave to linger, alter route and appreciate the surroundings as they chose. Additionally, at a time when there were few unclimbed summits left, guideless ascents, like winter climbing, afforded a different and novel method of claiming a peak. As tourism developed, and climbing became more commercialised, many inexperienced people were led up mountainsides; climbing without guides was a way of distinguishing 'real' mountaineers, which often meant AC members, from such tourist activities. As Arthur Cust put it, 'the only way real mountaineers would be able to differentiate themselves would be by banding together to go without guides.' An indication, however, of the snobbery and elitism that existed amongst some seasoned climbers is evident in his description of 'tourist' climbers as being ' hustled at every turn by creatures whose development has reversed Darwin's process.'[130] Climbing without guides provided a hierarchical social distinction that many

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126 Whymper, "Two Lady Alpine Climbers," *Girls Own Paper*, December 15, (1885): 164.
127 E.L.S,"In Memoriam Gertrude Lowthian Bell," *Alpine Journal*, 38 (1934): 383. She climbed Piz Palu at least 4 times.
128 "Note by the Editor," *Alpine Journal* 5, (1870): 96; Girdlestone 1870.
129 Cust, "The Matterhorn without Guides," *Alpine Journal*, 8, (1877):242-256.
130 ibid, 247.

climbers were keen to maintain, as well as demonstrating their purportedly superior mountaineering skills.



Figure 33. The Grand Charmoz, Chamonix.

Given the growing sentiment about guideless climbing within the wider mountaineering community, it is unsurprising that by the late 1880s women were eventually caught up in it. In 1889 Lily Bristow, Isabel Pasteur and her brother Charles, traversed the Grand Charmoz (figure 33) – rock pinnacles high above Chamonix – without guides. The following year they did a similar guideless rock climb, La Nonne (3340), also above Chamonix. Bristow, in 1891, became the first woman to be part of a climbing expedition with unrelated men.[131] Until this time there are no records of a woman climbing, on an equal basis, with men who were not part of her family. Although several women prior to this climbed alone with guides, class difference created a hierarchy that ensured a definite social distance between employer and employee.

131 Mumm 1923, 55–59, 331–335.

2.5 With Men.

This distinction between companion and guide will be discussed more fully in the following chapter, the important point for the moment is that during the 1890s, for the first time, some women joined male friends on mountaineering trips on the basis of being equally competent climbers. Bristow, for example, with Fred Mummery climbed the North ridge of the Zinalrothorn (4221) guideless for the first time, much to the surprise and disbelief of the locals, who claimed, 'non Mademoiselle, pas possible.'[132] She was one of the first women to climb consistently without guides and like Le Blond was a keen photographer responsible for carrying and manipulating the 'heavy plate camera.' It was with one of these that she captured the well-known image, within mountaineering, of Mummery, climbing his eponymous crack (Figure 34). During this ascent of the Grepon (3482), - a first for a woman - he claimed she 'showed the representatives of the Alpine Club the way steep rocks should be climbed,' on occasions even 'scorning the proffered rope.'[133]



Figure 34. A.F Mummery climbing the 'Mummery Crack' on the Grepon, 1893. Photo by Lily Bristow. (AC Library).

132 "An Easy Day for a Lady," *Alpine Journal*, 54, (1942); 370-374.
133 Mummery 1895, 158.

Acceptance of women climbers by some men must not be interpreted as common to all AC members. The following description by Mary Mummery, writing of their first winter ascent of the Teufelsgrat ridge on the Taschhorn (4491) in 1887 again demonstrates that shift in confidence by some women climbers to publically air controversial views.

> 'The slopes of the Breithorn & the snow of the Wiesstor are usually supposed to mark the limit of ascents suitable to the weaker sex - indeed, strong prejudices are apt to be aroused the moment a woman attempts any more formidable sort of mountaineering. It appears to me, however, that her powers are.... better suited to the really difficult climbs than to the monotonous snow grinds usually considered more fitting. .....The masculine mind, however...holds it as an article of faith....that she should be satisfied with watching through a telescope some weedy and invertebrate masher being hauled up a steep peak by a couple of burly guides.'[134]

This was a woman who clearly was not inhibited about making her opinions known; a very different approach to that of Brevoort or the Pigeon sisters who couched any criticism of men in more muted tones, and even then rarely publically. Mummery spoke plainly, but lived up to her claim that women were capable of technically difficult climbs; she was the first to conquer the challenging 'Devil's Ridge' of the Taschhorn which, as present-day mountaineers note, remains one of 'the most famous ridge routes in the Pennine Alps.'[135] Although acceptance and appreciation of women climbers was changing, as discussed in chapter 2, it was patchy and more complex than might at first appear. It is apposite to remember that membership of the AC only became available to women in 1974.

Regardless of men's acceptance, the 1890s undoubtedly saw more women mountaineers amongst the highest Alpine peaks. (See Appendix 1 & 2) Mrs Roberts-Thomson and Grace Filder achieved two new routes on the Lyskamm; the Pasteur sisters, Georgina Paine, Mabel Neruda and Margaret Leman also added to the list of women's first ascents as did Beatrice Tommason (1857-

[134] Mummery 1908, 67–68.
[135] Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 76.

1957).[136] This well-educated woman, seen with her guide in figure 35, is in some sense emblematic of the period; unlike most other women climbers she earned her own living. Tommason worked as a tutor for several eminent Prussian generals, translated books from German to English and lived in various places in her role as a governess. She began climbing in 1883 when living in Innsbruck and later joined the Austrian Alpine Club, which did not exclude women.

Tommason is particularly renowned for several first ascents, for either sex, in the Dolomites. These often involved 50-degree ice walls and technical rock climbing. The south face of the Marmolada, however, which had defeated several of 'the best climbers of the time', was arguably her finest achievement. She climbed it in July 1901. Even today some feel it is 'the most prominent climbing wall in the Dolomites.' [137]

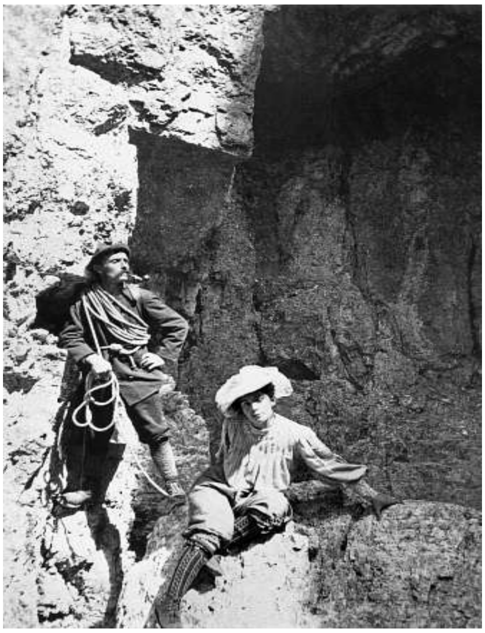


Figure 35. Beatrice Tommason with guide Arcangelo Siorpaes, circa 1890. (Reisach 2001)

At the turn of the century, Gertrude Bell (1868-1926) typifies, to some extent, the change that had occurred in women's climbing since the early 1860s, and the new social opportunities women were beginning to access. Bell's tours were not the family affairs experienced by Walker and Brevoort or the honeymoon

[136] Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 114.
[137] Reisach 2001.

excursions of Winkworth and Spence-Watson. Like Tomasson, Le Blond and Richardson, she climbed alone with her guides and like them possessed a high degree of self-belief. With Maud Meyer, a mathematician from Girton College, Cambridge, Bell was one of the first female climbers to have a university education – she graduated with a first in Modern History from Oxford. She is often better remembered for her role in Middle Eastern politics, particularly Iraq, not least because a Sheikh, who negotiated with Bell, reputedly exclaimed, 'if this is one of their women, what must their men be like?'[138]

Although her mountaineering career was short, 1899-1904, she concentrated on new or more remote climbs. Preferring rock to snow and ice-climbing, she created many new routes amongst the rocky pinnacles of the Engelhorner near Grindelwald.[139] Her most important first ascent, though, was the Lauteraarhorn-Schreckhorn traverse (4042) – a rocky ridge that stands high above this same range. It was the scene of some Alpine rivalry when Bell and her guides, descending from the summit of the Lauteraarhorn (4042), met the party of another woman, Fraulein Kuntze, coming from the opposite direction. Neither greeted each other with any enthusiasm.[140]

Bell's most impressive climbing feat, though, was her attempt to surmount the ridge on the northeast face of the Finsteraarhorn (4273) in 1902, a 1000-metre rock wall, as seen in figure 36. It had been climbed only once before, and remains, 'the most difficult route on the mountain.' Even by 1977, it had been climbed only eleven times.[141] Bell's party got within 300 metres of the summit when weather forced a retreat. They were compelled to bivouac overnight in a 'raging thunder and snow storm.' The next day they retraced their steps down the rock ridge in ferocious blizzard conditions, roped all the way because of the treacherous situation. Progress was necessarily slow which resulted in yet another night bivouacking – this time on the glacier and in rain rather than snow.

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138 E.L.S, "In Memoriam Gertrude Bell" 1926; Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 52; Lukitz 2004.
139 G. Bell 1928; G. Bell 1929b.
140 Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 39.
141 Dumler and Burkhardt 1993, 51–52.

They were out for fifty-seven hours, of which fifty-three were spent roped together.



Figure 36. NE face of the Finsteraarhorn. Bell's route followed the rock ridge in the centre of the photograph.[142]

Miriam O'Brien, an American mountaineer, who became the first woman to succeed on this route almost thirty years later, described Bell's descent as 'a marvellous feat of endurance and courage.'[143] Bell's guide Ulrich Fuhrer claimed, 'had she not been full of courage and determination, we must have perished.'[144] This comment, however, made in the context of an obituary, may have exaggerated her qualities. Bell on at least one occasion was candid about being completely terrified.[145]The expedition, nevertheless, highlights the extreme conditions some of these women were prepared to endure for the prize of creating a new route on a mountain.

3. Summary

The peaks most women mountaineers climbed were dangerous; some, like Bell's Finsteraarhorn attempt, more than others. This was something they recognised but accepted. Virtually all the women detailed above knew of someone who had

142 www.summitpost.org/images/medium/491609.jpg.
143 O'Brien 1931.
144 E.L.S , "In memoriam Gertrude Lowthian Bell," *Alpine Journal*, 38 (1926):296-299.
145 G. Bell, "Lyskamm and Monte Rosa," *Alpine Journal,* 41 (1929a): 280.

been injured or killed.[146] Many had experienced frostbite or the beginnings of hypothermia themselves.[147] The Matterhorn fatalities, in 1865, attracted much publicity. *The Times* editorial rhetorically asked, 'Is it duty? Is it common sense? Is it not wrong?' to be climbing mountains in this manner. What exactly was the point of such wilful sacrifice?[148] This prompted many letters both for and against the rigours of Alpinism. Regardless of the opinion of wider society, though, climbers continued their expeditions where injury and death were always a possibility. Barely a year passed between 1854 and 1900 in which *The Times* did not record the demise of a climber somewhere in the Alps. These ranged from minor falls to the loss of a whole climbing party.[149] Despite such adverse publicity, many women mountaineers, as shown in the attached appendices and discussed above, willingly attempted climbs on mountains that had dangerous reputations. They did not confine themselves to more predictably easy and safe routes. The physical demands were great, and as demonstrated, the days often extended well beyond 12 to 14 hours of extreme exercise.

It is not suggested that all women mountaineers were so adventurous, but that there was a distinct group – the subject of this chapter – for whom *all* the peaks of the Alps, not just some, were possible targets. Richardson's climb of the Bionnassay ridge, Walker's ascent of the Aiguille Verte, Le Blond's many winter climbs together with Jackson, Straton, Brevoort, Tommason and Bell's unprecedented achievements bear testimony to this. The notion that female travellers were not interested in claiming untrodden areas for themselves needs to be re -evaluated in the light of these women's activities.[150]

As the century progressed fewer unclimbed summits remained but, as Bell demonstrated, like men, women unearthed new routes on previously climbed

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146 "The Lyskamm Accident," *Alpine Journal*, 8, 1878. This lists donations by many women and men to aid the families of three guides who died on the Lyskamm.

147 Coolidge, "A Day and a Night on the Bietschhorn," *Alpine Journal* 6, (1872): 114-24; Jackson, " A Winter Quartette," *Alpine Journal*, 14 (1889) 200-210; ; Le Blond 1883; Pigeon 1885; Paillon, "Miss K Richardson," *La Montagne, 23* (1927):326-332.

148 "Accident on the Matterhorn," *The Times* 1865.

149 "The Fatal Alpine Accident,"*The Times* , Sept. 12, 1877; "Accident on the Engadine,"*The Times* Sept.1,1874b.

150 Domosh and Seager 2001, 144.

mountains. Emily Paine, for example, climbed the west ridge of the otherwise well frequented Weissmies (4031) for the first time, and Richardson was first to descend the north face of Castor (4222). From around 1890 climbing without guides became more common and mixed sex groups gradually evolved. Winter climbing, as begun by Brevoort and Straton, and developed by Jackson and Le Blond, continued to provide novel ways of climbing. It would be a mistake however to presume that women climbers only concerned themselves with new routes. That would be far from the truth. Many, indeed most, were like Hornby, Hilda Brown, Anna and Ellen Pigeon happy to claim an unclimbed peak if the opportunity arose but content, in the main, to climb mountains that were no longer virgin territory; they enjoyed the whole environment of the mountains as much as new conquests.

The achievements of these different women in climbing all the major Alpine summits between 1857 and 1890, and creating new routes on previously climbed peaks, I suggest, could be recognised as the female equivalent of the 'Golden Age' of Alpinism. This period began with the first ascent of Monte Rosa and ended with Richardson's descent on Castor. If the male 'Golden Age' reflected the fervour of capturing new territory, the female equivalent represented conquering not only new geographical landmarks, but also repossessing the country of their own bodies in a new way. Women climbers were beginning to erode the artificial, cultural restrictions and borders created around the female body. Their activities are good examples of what Butler describes as 'strategies of subversive repetition within cultural constructions of gender.'[151] Arguably, for the first time, the extreme physical and mental capabilities of women were being publicly displayed – even if it was to a limited audience. Due to the greater social constraints imposed on women, they clearly took longer than men to climb all the summits but, in some sense, overcoming these restrictions only emphasises their commitment.

All these women - whether casual or experienced mountaineers - climbed in a group; how this was constructed, the various parameters needed for success and

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[151] Butler 2006, 145–7.

how personal interactions fitted into perceived social norms is the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 5. 'A Funny-Looking Party'.[1]

The Interaction and Social Relations of the Climbing Group

Although women were a common sight amongst the glaciers and higher peaks they were not alone but members of a climbing group; a mixture of guides, porters and amateur mountaineers. This entity – the mountaineering party –is the subject of this chapter. Mountaineering required teamwork that hinged on an understanding and trusting relationship. Considering how a party worked together – the dynamics and interactions between climbers – provides an excellent means of revealing how the technical, physical and psychological demands on women were interwoven with the needs of others. Women's own knowledge of their body's fitness, strength, balance and calmness was essential to their role as team members. The first half of the chapter examines in microcosm these specific physical and psychological demands.

Studying group interactions occupies the rest of the chapter. The different relationships between members of the climbing party allows comparison of the practice of mixed-sex mountaineering to be drawn against the cultural preconceptions of the time that surrounded gender attributes and roles. This reveals that gender and class interactions were often complex, inconsistent and changed with location.

1.The Climbing Body

To climb successfully is to understand the limits of the body's capabilities in a given environment – its speed, power, endurance, flexibility, balance, kinaesthetic sense as well as psychological resolve and ability to be calm under duress. Every mountaineer needs this but clearly for women in the second half of the nineteenth century, when strenuous exercise was discouraged and biological determinism affected many of the perceptions of women, such self-knowledge

[1] Coolidge,"A Day and a Night on the Bietschhorn," *Alpine Journal*, 6 (1872): 117.

was not as readily available as for men. Climbing was sometimes the first occasion when women recognised what they were physically capable of achieving.

This is where Simone de Beauvoir's notion of the 'situated body' is helpful. De Beauvoir's identification of women with the materiality of the body might be interpreted as concurring with nineteenth-century biologically determinist views. De Beauvoir, however, saw women's bodies not as constraints but as providing the route to freedom. The 'situated body', as outlined in the introduction, is woman in her entirety, in a particular historical and geographic setting – it is her actions, thoughts, decisions, behaviour and not just her sex, that coalesce to create an ontological whole.[2] Women's bodies provided both experience of the world and knowledge of themselves; mountaineering brought this understanding to new heights, literally and metaphorically. It was the 'body as a situation' that gave women the freedom to choose to position themselves at the bottom of a rock face, to teeter over a crevasse or to spend uncomfortable cramped nights with strangers out on the mountain.

Women's actions and physicality were not only subjective, personal feelings and experiences but also presented objective evidence to others in the climbing group of women's competence in particular environments. This was important because everyone's success and safety rested on each other's abilities – they were unconditionally interdependent. The whole group needed to know, accept and trust each other's abilities as mountaineers – whether male or female. The following considerations of different aspects of climbing make this clear.

1.1 Speed.

The continually changing nature of snow, ice, rock and gradient altered the physical response needed by climbers. In a sense the mountain moulded the body to its demands; requirements that often changed several times within a matter of hours. Climbing parties– as they still do - travelled at the pace of the slowest member. The fitness of each individual, therefore, affected everyone; being too slow risked being benighted or caught by bad weather. The lead guide

[2] For a clear enunciation of De Beauvoir's situated body see De Beauvoir 2011, 46–7; Moi 1999, 57–72; Young 2005a.

assessed the ability of those in a climbing party before deciding on the itinerary. Mary Taylor pointed out that guides 'will refuse to go with ladies [or men], of whose capacity or endurance they are not assured.'[3] To do so risked the lives of everyone.

Victorian climbers obsessively recorded their times of ascent, which makes it easy to assess women's relative fitness. In 1873, for example, Miss Thurston and Miss Sands climbed from Chamonix to the Grand Mulets hut in four and a half hours – a similar time to mountaineers Ellen and Anna Pigeon six years previously.[4] This rate of ascent compares well with today's view that a very fit party in good weather – with all the benefits of modern, lightweight clothing and equipment – could manage 500 metres an hour, not allowing for effects of altitude.[5] Clearly, the greater the height the slower the rate of ascent becomes. Many people climbed to the Grand Mulets because access to the glacier was close to Chamonix. It gave people, who would not necessarily think of themselves as mountaineers, a taste of the 'real' Alpine environment with glaciers, crevasses, snowfall and a mountain refuge to stay in overnight, if necessary. Despite its popularity, it was still a demanding excursion only suitable for those who were fit and prepared for strenuous exercise. The significant number of women's names in the hut record book provides compelling evidence for a good basic level of fitness possessed by many ordinary women and a more widespread involvement of women in climbing groups than might have been supposed.[6]

1.2 On the Rope.

Until glaciers, steeper snow slopes or rocks were reached individuals in a party were free, within reason, to travel at their own pace. On reaching these obstacles, however, the nature of the excursion changed. Any rambling, pausing to admire a view, or regain breath came to an abrupt end; climbers roped together and the true interdependency of the group came into play. The most experienced guide usually led; his task being not only to find the correct route but, when necessary, to break trail through new snow, cut steps in the ice or negotiate the safest path

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[3] Five Ladies 2003, 17.
[4] *Visitors Book for the Grand Mulets* 1865. These women's Christian names are unknown.
[5] Cliff 1986, 32.
[6] *Visitors Book for the Grand Mulets* 1865.

through crevasses. Once on the rope everyone had to keep the same pace; individuality was suppressed for the benefit of the team. Havergal described her first experience of this,

> the guide goes first ....and we follow *exactly* in his track; but each step is a separate business, you stand firm and take time to plant each foot, not the least like walking.[7]

It was not always easy. Hornby, while delighting in the safety the rope gave on steep and crevassed ground, confessed 'I never can manage on a nearly flat glacier with the rope. I want sometimes to walk in one way, sometimes in another and it is so tiresome to have to stop them every minute.'[8]

In soft snow following the guide's trail precisely, as Havergal did, made walking easier. Yet, even with this help, walking in deep snow was exhausting. Spence-Watson described the crucial teamwork employed, 'we had come to soft deep snow & plunged in to the knee at every stride, and we had to change and change about continually for the fatigue of leading was great.'[9] Deep snow featured in many accounts, male or female, and could change the whole nature of an expedition.[10] A party, for example, that made the same excursion to the Grand Mulets as those mentioned above, but in soft snow, took seven hours instead of the more usual two for the last half of the journey.[11] By contrast, ground that was 'crisp and hard' was 'first rate... for walking' and progress was similarly rapid.[12]

1.3 Climbing Ice.

Hard, steep, snow slopes presented other problems, however. Climbers did not commonly use crampons – metal spikes strapped to boots – until the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. With no crampons, steps on steep snow or ice had to be cut with an axe by the foremost guide. On long, steep slopes, several hundred might be fashioned in this way. This was exhausting work for the guides but it was taxing for all members of the party; they waited motionless, getting

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7 Crane 1881, 120.
8 Hornby 1907, 138, 154.
9 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," July 10th 1863.
10 Crane 1881, 119; Five Ladies 2003, 39; Hornby 1907, 10, 86; Jackson, "A Winter Quartette," *Alpine Journal*, 14, (1889): 202; Le Blond 1883, 50.
11 Miss A Townsend Sept 5th 1864 in *Visitors Book for the Grand Mulets* 1865.
12 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence -Watson," July 18th 1863.

colder by the minute, unable to move, often balancing on their toes wedged into icy crevices, until the next succession of steps were cut. Mary Mummery wrote of how she felt she could not endure another moment – only the inevitable prospect of falling if she moved prematurely kept her hanging on.[13] Jackson's experience on the Jungfrau traverse in 1888 gives an indication of how difficult and time-consuming cutting steps could be,

> Thirty, perhaps thirty-five steps alone separated us from [the rocky ridge]... but they would have to be cut out again in the hard ice, and in the very teeth of a gale. Almer set to work at once and succeeded in clearing three or four of them, then Christian Jossi....then Mr Boss, and for nearly three hours they fought...without getting even half way to the rocks.[14]

When ascending the JungfrauJoch the Pigeon sisters recorded *five hours* of step cutting.[15] Steps were needed because of the steepness of the slopes. Brevoort described how on one occasion she 'stood with my hands in the top hole & my feet in the lower,' and was 'standing up with scarce any leaning at all.'[16] The cascade of ice showering down from those working above made such a delicate position yet more precarious and unpleasant. These different mountain conditions – soft snow, steep ice walls and long days - all demanded patience and endurance; the ability to continue relentlessly and undaunted regardless of the situation was crucial.[17]

The detail of these various instances – using the rope, maintaining speed, negotiating deep snow and steep ice slopes – are important because it highlights the various ways women needed to perform as team members. Contemporary views of appropriate activities and behaviour for women had to be put aside. It was impossible for any member of a climbing party to be treated substantially differently to anyone else. All had to sustain a high level of physical exertion. Women needed to know – or learn – how to use and trust their bodies to perform in this mountain setting if they were to become climbers.

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[13] Mummery 1908, 90.
[14] Jackson 1889, "A Winter Quartette," 206.
[15] Pigeon 1885, 11.
[16] Brevoort ,"To her Sister from Belalp," July 10, 1867a.
[17] Hornby 1907, 169.

1.4 Balance and Cool heads.

Endurance combines physical fitness with mental strength – that ability to continually drive the body forward when all natural instinct shouts for it to stop. Hornby, who knew she was slow, recounts how a fellow German climber 'admired my "Ausdaner" [endurance]. I said I had plenty of "Ausdaner" but required time.'[18] The safety of the whole party demanded not only endurance but also a degree of technical skill, agility, and kinaesthetic awareness all held together by a determined mental resolve. Women's confidence in their physical and mental capacity was essential; they had to know the flexibility, strength, and balance they possessed. Such practical awareness of their physical and psychological ability would not have been evident if women had absorbed, and were compliant with, the extant medico-scientific discussions. As mentioned in chapter three, however, the evidence suggests most mountaineers paid these debates little attention. A good example of these qualities in action is Elizabeth Spence-Watson's description of crossing the Weissthor (3600m), a knife-edge ridge between Zermatt and Macugnaga.

> It is so narrow there is barely foot room & on one side there is a sheer descent of some hundreds of feet, & on the other a fearful precipice of snow & rock extending thousands of feet into the green valley of Macugnaga. Along this ridge we had to walk for some twenty minutes each step carefully cut & tried by the foremost guide, & all of us roped together for fear of a slip, though had there been one I think the probability would have been that the one who fell would have dragged the others after him. However no such slip occurred – we all had what they call good heads & no fear & once on the ridge conscious that all due precautions had been taken we seemed to lose the sense of danger & went gaily on.[19]

These ridges were, and remain, a common challenge on most high Alpine routes. They demanded good proprioception, body awareness, balance, and self-confidence from all members of the party. Teamwork, again, was essential; each person needed to trust the abilities of others, regardless of gender. As Spence-Watson's account conveys - with that curious combination of apprehension and elation – if one person fell it was likely others would follow. Hornby records how

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18 Hornby 1907, 166.

19 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," July 3rd 1863.

she revelled in negotiating such 'narrow arêtes.'[20] Thin snow bridges were other potentially hazardous obstacles that also required a calm, determined approach. Havergal wrote, 'one has to walk along a ridge just wide enough to tread, with beautiful blue crevasses yawning on each side.' Falling was not to be entertained.[21]

Rock climbing often had similar kinaesthetic, psychological and teamwork requirements. To reach a hold, for example, it was sometimes necessary to stand on the shoulders of another climber.[22] Gertrude Bell wrote of how, on one occasion, three of them made a human ladder,

> Ulrich climbed up by the rock and our bodies and planted himself firmly on the back of my neck and I felt him fingering up for the hold above him. Presently he remarked, conversationally: " I do not feel very safe. If you move, we are all dead."[23]

Nothing could make the essential interdependence of climbing more plain. Agility, trust in fellow climbers, knowledge of one's own body and the preparedness to adapt to whatever the mountain and its conditions required were key features.

On occasions, women's quick thinking or particular experience proved vital for the success of the expedition. Mary Mummery, for example, fulfilled the role of medical adviser, bandaging hands and checking for broken ribs after a fellow mountaineer fell during their climb of the Taschhorn. Arthur Cust recalled the swift reactions of a woman whose 'pluck and presence of mind ..... to throw herself into a firm posture of resistance' saved a guide from disappearing down a crevasse.[24] Anna Pigeon, because of an incompetent porter, took the rearguard position on the rope in their descent of the Sesia Joch; a situation normally reserved for the strongest and more experienced mountaineer.[25] These episodes demonstrate that women were not passive members of a climbing party being quietly led up the mountain by more purposeful or talented men. Indeed, the

20 Hornby 1907, 85.
21 Crane 1881, 78.
22 Mummery 1908, 90.
23 Bell, "Concerning Mountains: Die Engelhorner,: *Alpine Journal*, 41, (1929b): 30.
24 Mummery 1908; Cust, "Expedition News," *Alpine Journal*, 7 (1874): 217.
25 "Note by the Editor," *Alpine Journal*, 5 (1870):96.

particular role played by some of these women made them indispensible to the success of their expeditions.

It is important to underline the implications of this particular 'micro history,' of how it feeds into a wider view of Victorian women. The relatively egalitarian circumstances, the teamwork, adventure, and dangers common to mountaineering expeditions were sharply at odds with many other facets of social life for middle-class women in the second half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, prevailing perceptions – both then and now - about gender relations and women's agency in Victorian Britain tend to occlude precisely this kind of activity. It does not fit with visions of 'separate spheres' or 'the weaker sex'; women are rarely portrayed as being capable of physicality never mind actually enjoying it.

The mountain environment and the unusual demands and circumstances experienced by female mountaineers, prompts consideration of how exceptional or typical they were. Women such as Isabella Bird and Mary Kingsley climbed and explored in Tibet, the Rockies and Africa respectively, but such remote locations meant they were the exception rather than the rule. This thesis, in revealing the detailed activities of numerous female climbers with very diverse ability, in the more accessible and extremely popular location of the Alps, suggests women's excursions into these mountains were not particularly unusual. The study casts new light on the wider understanding of middle-class women's actions and agency in the Victorian period. Their exploration of the mountains, with all the risks and physicality involved, was accepted and familiar to many, even if such acceptance often remained unmentioned or publicly highlighted.

1.5 Femininity put aside.

Bell's description of constructing a human ladder highlights the way women climbers embraced activities that flew in the face of what might be interpreted as 'ladylike'. As will be discussed in the following chapter, mountaineers almost had another 'way of being', a double life, different above the snowline to that below.

Rock climbing, as Bell showed, often demanded the foot or hand had to grasp or rest on seemingly unattainable ledges, frequently in positions not thought of as 'feminine'. Hornby describes one such incident, 'there seemed no footing at all in the chimney and I had to worm myself up till I could get on my knees on a flat stone, and I kept getting my head under this stone, and could not get beyond it.[26] Similarly, the leaping of crevasses was not a task for women who felt restricted to demure deportment. While many crevasses could be sidestepped, some were unavoidable if the party was to progress. Elizabeth Le Blond descending from the Grand Jorasses with unfamiliar guides in the dark, confronted a large crevasse and confessed, 'I summoned up all my courage. I floundered off my feet and after what seemed an age found myself [landing] on the other side'.[27]

If ascents required a level and manner of physical discipline and exertion not generally displayed at home in Britain, descents also on occasion included a degree of 'romping' and freedom that were equally surprising. Mountaineers of all abilities, when conditions were suitable, used glissading.[28] It was an exhilarating form of rapid descent enjoyed by nearly everyone; control, however, was always variable – tumbles and spills inevitable. Havergal's fall as she descended from the Grand Mulets shows the importance and interrelatedness of the team. Still roped together, the quick reactions from another member of the party fortunately checked her unplanned exit down the mountainside.[29] Hornby, however, had a closer brush with disaster.

> We were rashly glissading down the Swiss side of the Col de Miage (3376m) when we were caught in a small avalanche and went rolling over and over, and finally lodged on the edge of a crevasse down which the greater part of my luggage and both the guides ice axes disappeared and were never recovered.[30]

She made light of it but recognised it was an accident that could have had more serious consequences. Hornby also indulged in a form of 'sledging.' As with glissading, leaping crevasses, and worming up chimneys it challenged any notion

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[26] Hornby 1907, 25–26.
[27] Le Blond 1883, 37.
[28] Crane 1881, 215; Five Ladies 2003, 38; Jackson,"A Winter Quartette," *Alpine Journal,* 14 (1889): 203; Plunket 1875;"Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson" July 21 1863.
[29] Crane 1881, 216–217.
[30] Hornby 1907, 8.

of feminine delicacy or restraint and like them indicates the physical freedoms afforded by women's bodily experience of the mountains. Such activities sit in stark contrast to Ruskin and Patmore's popular projections of femininity, or to advice in etiquette books and fictional depictions of women such as Dora in Dickens' *David Copperfield*. 'I sit down, holding my petticoat up in front', Hornby explained, 'and the guides rush down, dragging me as on a sledge'. In this fashion she descended a snow slope on the Finsteraarhorn in five minutes that took two hours to go up.[31] Efficient it may have been, but feminine it was not.

Enjoyment of outdoor exercise often went beyond walking and climbing. Many women joined friends and guides to skate, sledge and occasionally swim. Jackson and Le Blond were particularly keen on the former whilst Hornby, frequently sent her guide ahead while she 'had a delightfully refreshing but very cold bathe', a pleasure she shared with Spence-Watson.[32] These all demonstrate the way women deviated from the sense of propriety normally expected of them in Britain.[33] Evidently, both practical necessity and sheer gratification took precedence over 'correctness'. That is not to say they purposefully or willingly became 'manly'. As will be discussed in the following chapter most women appeared comfortable with their femininity but were happy to push the bounds of respectability in these particular circumstances.

Nevertheless, it is important to be aware that women's attitudes varied: a few women tried to avoid almost *any* exercise and eschewed anything remotely dangerous. Some, whilst not wanting to go into the real high mountains, nevertheless, desired to experience something of the 'alpine ambience.' Consequently, they were carried in sedan chairs from Grindelwald to Wengen, for example, or on a guide's back over particularly difficult parts of a glacier.[34] Clearly not all women were as bold as people like the Pigeon sisters, Hornby or Richardson, but the evidence suggests most of those who explored the

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31 Hornby 1907, 12, 87.
32 Hornby 1907, 127; Jackson, "A Winter Quartette," 1889; Le Blond 1928; "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson 1863.
33 Campbell 1898.
34 "Ferdinand Imseng Führerbüche" 1863, K39, AC London.

mountains, rather than remaining in hotels, did not require significantly more help than many of the men.

1.6 Dealing with Difficulties.

Knowledge of their body's capabilities, its strengths and weaknesses grew with women's mountaineering experience. Unsurprisingly previous achievements boosted confidence and as the appendices show led women to attempt progressively more demanding routes. For all the rewards and enjoyment, however, there were also doubts, frustrations, exhaustion and the general weariness common to all climbers.

The success of a climbing party depended as much on psychological resolve as on physical strength. Meta Brevoort, for example, felt unable to continue her ascent of the Jungfrau due to the ' miserable night in the Faulberg[hut] ....and my poor thumping heart.' It left her wondering, needlessly as it happened, if she would ever be able to do a 'grande course' again.[35] Sprains, strains, stiff and painful joints, pepper several accounts (of men and women).[36] Bell left her mother in no doubt how she felt after a climb in the Dauphiné, 'It *was* hard work! I wished to die several times, and I cursed all idiots who climbed mountains.' Brevoort and Hornby's letters depict many moments of exhaustion. Spence-Watson described the rigours of an endless descent under a cloudless sky, 'heat & hunger & thirst all assailed us, until we just jogged on mechanically & how finally my knee again turned troublesome, so that every step caused so much pain.'[37]

These sentiments and setbacks were part of mountaineering; they had to be dealt with if an expedition was to be successful. They were the price paid for indulging in such strenuous activities. Focussing on these material conditions experienced by women, from sprains to sunburn, is crucial because it demonstrates the importance of the body functioning as a whole – how the vital interaction of mental strength with physical adversity determined the success of an expedition. Moreover, these conditions and the bodily knowledge they

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35 Brevoort, "Letter to her sister after Jungfrau Attempt," July 14 1867b.
36 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson June 16th 1864; Five Ladies 2003, 35; Brevoort, " Letter to sister about injury," Sept. 17, 1865; Freshfield 1861, 30.
37 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson June 26 1864.

generated sit in stark contrast to the normal milieu associated with middle-class Victorian women.

Assaults on the body did not all come from exercise; high altitude and reflected light made sunburn a constant difficulty. At a time when women's appearance was integral to her femininity, a ruddy complexion was of more concern to women than men.[38] Brevoort wrote to her sister that she and her nephew were badly sunburnt, but he refused to use cold cream because it 'disgusts him'. Le Blond is renowned for the advice her great aunt gave her mother, 'Stop her climbing mountains! She is scandalizing all London and looks like a red Indian!' Gertrude Bell, on the other hand, warned her mother to 'expect to see a dark red stick alighting on Redcar platform' when she returned from the Alps.[39] Burnt, cracked lips, sore and peeling faces were part of what women, and men, endured for the sake of being amongst the highest mountains.[40] Undoubtedly, this deterred some women; those, for example, who asked Le Blond if she had developed her complexion crossing the glacier that morning – if so they would refrain from doing the same.[41]

Some protection was available; spectacles with coloured lenses were used together with thick creams or pastes and muslin veils – but their effect seems limited.[42]Some women, as seen in figure 37, used a full complement of sun defences, but Hornby could not bear to 'wear both mask and spectacles.'[43] Indeed, to wear such a combination clearly required a degree of self-confidence not possessed by everyone.

The 'lived experience' of women climbers demonstrates the important role the body plays in enabling people to experience new situations; it is its own subjective consciousness as well as being an objective 'thing' observed by others. The body both perceives and interacts with the surrounding world; it therefore

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38 Dent 1892, 81. A fuller consideration of women's appearance occurs in the following chapter.
39 Bell, "Dauphine and the Aiguille Meridionale," *Alpine Journal*, 40 (1928):3-12.
40 Five Ladies 2003, 44–45; Hornby 1907, 12–13.
41 Brevoort, "To her Sister from Belalp," July 10, 1867a.
42 Dent 1892, 80–82.
43 Hornby 1907, 13.

enables or restricts how an individual acts. This is why the micro-history and detailed examination of the intricacies of climbing, detailed above, are important. Women mountaineers uncovered a freedom and sense of self-belief – physically and mentally – that could then encourage further endeavours. The body was not merely, or principally, a repository of gender, as Butler might argue but, in its totality, fundamental to who and what the woman was. The body, as De Beauvoir maintained, became a visible enactment of these women's live's 'projects,' one of which was mountaineering. This endeavour encompassed the whole woman not simply her as 'a sexed being'. In using and experiencing their bodies when climbing, women could reveal hitherto unknown possibilities. 'No one can judge of what they can do here', claimed Havergal, 'by what they can do in England.'[44]



Figure 37. The arresting sight of Elizabeth Main (Le Blond) with protective glasses and mask, circa 1890. Unknown location. (AC Library)

Marcel Mauss, anthropologist and sociologist writing in the 1970s, felt mountaineering induced a state of composure, almost a stoicism – it taught the

[44] Crane 1881, 125.

body to endure and made the subsequent gaining of the summit all the sweeter; a period of fortitude to experience a later elation.[45] Hornby articulates this well; when struggling up the Marmolata she mentions how 'I could hardly put one foot before another,' but on gaining the summit 'instantly felt as if I had not taken a step.'[46] Other climbers expressed similar sensations.[47]

1.7 Climbing – learnt or innate?

Mauss's theory proposes that there is no such thing as 'natural' movement or innate behaviour; everything is acquired and learnt through observation, imitation and cultural immersion. Anthropologist, Mary Douglas, felt he had confused the relation between nature and culture. She pointed out there are some ways of acting common to all peoples, irrespective of location. The unconsciousness and universality of an action, she proposed, made it 'natural' and then local custom gave it a particular cultural depiction.[48]

The activity of women mountaineers does not fit comfortably into Douglas's definition of 'natural'; climbing was more an acquired, 'Maussian' skill. It was not an unconscious activity anymore than it was universal. Fitness, control of movement, proprioceptive awareness, agility, balance and strength were, in some sense, learnt; these abilities developed gradually to coalesce into a finely honed kinaesthetic talent. Moreover, it was something that needed to spring from familiarity with, or desire for, physical activity. Importantly women, if they were to be successful and enjoy mountaineering at the highest level, needed to engage with some sort of exercise even before they went to the mountains; they had to have some physical skill and insight into their body's capability that could then be built upon.

Accounts by mountaineers Spence-Watson, Mary De La Beche Nicholl, Millicent Fawcett and Anna Pigeon support this; they all mention love of exercise and physical activity, which had often developed during childhood. Skating, riding,

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[45] Mauss 1973, 70–88.
[46] Hornby 1907, 85.
[47] Five Ladies 2003, 95.
[48] Douglas 1996, 72–73.

tennis, expeditions into the hills of Lakeland and Wales or just long walks locally are typical examples of these women's activities.[49] These people, and others like them, were clearly not restricted in their physical activity to the extent that medicine and social mores might have suggested. They went on to acquire the specialist physical skills of mountaineering by, as Mauss suggested, imitation, repetition and cultural immersion – but these were built on a foundation of a pre-existing familiarity with some degree of exercise, albeit a pale imitation of that encountered in the Alps. Frederica Plunket's book made it explicit; she encouraged a good fortnight's preparation prior to climbing in the Alps, warning that 'any neglect of the rule to train beforehand will surely be repented of.'[50]

1.8 Climbing – male or female?

Physician Clifford Allbutt claimed women climbers needed a 'masculine frame'[51] – a statement that contains two preconceptions. First that mountaineering was essentially male and second that the characteristics of a 'masculine frame' was one of muscularity and physical fitness. It informs as much about prevailing perceptions of the male as the female body. Although much has been written about the fear of physical degeneration surrounding the Boer War, concern over the poor quality of army recruits occurred much earlier.[52] During the Crimean war Charles Kingsley bemoaned that 'soon we will have arms but no men to shoulder them'.[53] In the early 1860s annual reports detailing recruits to the army show that between 42% and 44 % were rejected due to poor physique - a situation that improved only slowly over the following decade causing much public anxiety and discussion.[54] As outlined in chapter two, mountaineering was often championed as a way of developing improved physical strength. The ability to do strenuous exercise and possess a fit physique became an aspirational marker of masculinity.

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49 Fawcett 1924, 50;"Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson", 1863; Pigeon, "Letter to William Coolidge," March 19, 1909; Rubinstein 1991, 77; Thomas 1979, 17–20, 50.
50 Plunket 1875, 168–9.
51 Allbutt, "On the Health and Training of Mountaineers," *Alpine Journal*, 8 (1876): 30-40.
52 Jordan1993,7; Searle 1971,33-53; Szreter 1996, 132-148.
53 Quoted in Wohl 1983, 331.
54 Morgan 1865; "Recruits for the Army," *The Times,* December 13,1866; Wohl 1983, 331.

In a society that encouraged distinct, opposing, binaries of male and female, women capable of activities that were thought quintessentially male needed some explanation. One strategy that helped preserve the gender dominance was to imply successful female climbers necessarily possessed more masculine characteristics; women mountaineers it was suggested were unnaturally strong, bulky and well-muscled. Coolidge defended his late aunt, Meta Brevoort, against pejorative accusations of being 'a large Dutch American' lady when she was in fact slight and tall.[55] More recent mountaineering books often continue this thread.[56] Even Hansen's excellent thesis alleges Walker's 'stocky frame reinforced prevailing assumptions that mountain climbing tended to give women a more masculine appearance.'[57] Photographs of Walker during her climbing years, however, depict a slim, clearly feminine figure.

Women mountaineers, particularly those attempting the highest or more difficult summits, therefore enacted a perceived gender paradox. Their climbing, that necessarily encompassed physical and psychological strength, conflicted with the view at the time that these attributes belonged predominantly to men. Bordo argues that physically enacting such gendered contradictions, in a practical material way, provides a stronger stimulus for change than the interactions of discourse and discussion.[58] Moreover, Butler has shown how certain reiterated gestures, actions and movements affect perceptions of gender. By women's repeated actions and behaviour, and their acceptance by guides as members of a mountaineering party, women gradually undermined the notion of climbing as always gender specific or the Alps as purely a male preserve.

2.The Climbing Group

Women's climbing evidently challenged prevailing views of mountaineering as a male preserve, and simultaneously highlighted middle-class women's growing ability and confidence to indulge in strenuous physical activity. It is important to the purpose of this thesis, however, to show the complexity and diversity that often surrounded gender relations. Evidence of this is gleaned from studying the

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55 Coolidge 1903.
56 Clark 1953, 183; Ring 2000; Williams 1973, 42.
57 Hansen 1991, 307.
58 Bordo 2003, 165; Bordo 1998.

differing personal interactions and dynamics of various climbing groups, both on and off the mountain.

2.1 Guides

Women, and most men, commonly climbed with guides until the last decade of the nineteenth century. Even after this date, those who climbed without guides remained in the minority. Cicely Williams, for example, who climbed in the twentieth rather than the nineteenth century, always used Bernard Biner who was 'for thirty years [her] guide, philosopher and friend.'[59] Relationships with guides in the earlier period, however, were not always as straightforward and delightful. Whilst a few mountaineers, such as Lucy Walker, climbed like Williams with the same guide for her entire climbing career this was exceptional. More commonly a guide might be used for just one season or, if a good rapport developed, for a few successive seasons. Good guides rapidly established a following and clients sometimes had to negotiate with fellow climbers or rearrange travel plans to secure their first choice guide. The sheer popularity of the Alps and the short season – climbing began no earlier than mid June and finished by mid September – guaranteed a degree of competition.

The guide/client relationship is intriguing; it varied considerably and was, at times, complex. For much of the year many of these men had other jobs, for example as farmers (Brevoort's guide Christian Almer), hoteliers (Jackson's guide Emil Boss), or woodworkers (Walker's guide Melchior Anderegg). They were mountain men from a lower social class than the climbers for whom they had responsibility on the hill. Employed for their skill as professional mountaineers it is sometimes difficult to unravel how much they were servants, and how much valued friends. Either way these men were not in a social position to openly offer moral judgment or constrain the actions of their female clients, other than when this related to climbing expertise.

2.1.1 Sense of Superiority.

[59] Williams 1973.

Hornby, from 1881 to 1894, used Peter Anderegg as her guide. Despite such a prolonged association, their relationship was often tense. Failing in her attempt on the Dom in the first year they climbed together, she wrote of how Anderegg was 'perfectly miserable', and complained all the way down. Three years later, going from Zermatt to Arolla, she noted 'Would you believe it that idiot Peter & the other man took me the wrong way!.... I did scold them well and was in a fury.'[60] Her journal and letters are peppered with comments about his inability to cook, the likelihood he would lose the way, his inveterate spitting, and many other mannerisms she clearly found extremely irritating.[61] Most annoying of all was his tendency to fuss. Crossing a simple 'little rustic bridge' in the Dauphine, for example, she wrote,

> that idiot Peter would hold my dress behind while I crossed it. I could not stand that so the moment we had got across I turned sharply round recrossed it and came back again. He went on looking much dumbfounded.[62]

Anderegg presumably felt he was being helpful but Hornby – an authoritative, confident woman – clearly did not need or, as importantly, want such attendance. She probably viewed it as patronising. She enjoyed solitude and confessed to it being ' a fearful tie having a perpetual guide'. With their 'loafing about' they played 'on one's conscience when one wants to be quiet.'[63]

Despite what appears an uneasy relationship Hornby nevertheless used Anderegg for thirteen years. Despite her criticism, she must have held him in some regard and indeed often rewarded him with special meals, more beer and extra money.[64] Following an accident in 1894, which ended his climbing career, she went out of her way to visit him and his family and wrote of him as 'an old friend'.[65] Nevertheless in 1891 he travelled second class on the train whilst she had a 'first-class carriage all to myself'.[66] Friend he may have been but both were

[60] Hornby 1907, 22.
[61] Hornby 1907, 35, 157, 167.
[62] Hornby 1906, 31.
[63] Hornby 1907, 15.
[64] Hornby 1907, 145, 162, 175.
[65] Hornby 1907, 344–6.
[66] Hornby 1907, 162.

aware that it was the friendship of an employer and employee, heightened by the difference in social class.

This assertion of rank is also sensed in the brief notes written by the Pigeon sisters. Unlike Hornby they used many different guides. Although no detailed journals have survived, in the pamphlet they wrote guides are mentioned mainly when they have fallen short. In 1874 for example, they wrote 'Tried Mont Colon with Jos. Gillioz who failed to find the way: out 17 ½ hours and no peak!'[67] By contrast, their successful ascent of Mont Blanc, by a relatively new and unusual way with an overnight 'bivouack on the rocks,' gives no credit to their guide, Jean Antoine Carrel, who pioneered the route.[68] Possibly their dramatic experience on the Sesia Joch early in their mountaineering career (discussed in chapter 3) made them subsequently sceptical of guide's abilities.

2.1.2 Close Friendship.

Nevertheless, several women and their guides developed a great fondness and deep friendship with each other. Walker and her guide Melchior Anderegg (a cousin of Peter) kept in contact and spent time together long after their climbing days ended as pictured in figure 38.



[67] Pigeon 1885, 17.
[68] *Visitors Book for the Grand Mulets* 1865.

Figure 38. Lucy Walker & Melchior Anderegg outside the Monte Rosa Hotel, Zermatt, circa 1890, (AC Library).

Cicely Williams maintained that Walker, who was renowned for her wit, gave the reason she did not marry was because she loved 'mountains and Melchior' and 'Melchior already had a wife.'[69] Jackson also appears to have had excellent relations with the wide number of guides she used, developing a particular fondness in later years for Emil Boss, guide and hotelier in Grindelwald. Most women (and men) were keen to use recommended guides or those they knew. Le Blond in her early climbing years used Edouard Cupelin. He was unavailable on one occasion, and her expedition ran into difficulties. Crawling over a thin snow bridge in the dark as the one remaining candle went out she recalled how, ' I mentally registered a vow that nothing should ever induce me to make another ascent without Cupelin.'[70]

2.1.3 Strained Relationships.

The relationship between Christian Almer with Brevoort and her nephew Coolidge has often been described as particularly close.[71] Coolidge's famous dog Tschingel – the only female member of the Alpine Club – was a gift from Almer. Brevoort's letters in 1874, however, reveal a darker, more complex aspect to this liaison that, until now, has remained undisclosed. Almer never paid compliments and was naturally forthright; he told her in 1868, for example, she needed to lose fourteen pounds in weight. Nevertheless, their association was an enjoyable one; Brevoort told her sister 'he is a good man [and] 'takes such care of us.'[72] They had climbed together for five years before there was a clear change. In the summer of 1874, Brevoort felt victimised by Almer's 'hateful temper'.[73] Because of this, ten minutes into the start of an expedition she turned back, and for a week remained alone in La Grave while Coolidge climbed with Almer. After a depressing and lonely week, she confessed it was better 'to eat humble pie under the circumstances' and re-join the mountaineering party. She clearly remained

69 C. Williams 1973, 43.
70 Le Blond 1883, 8.
71 Clark 1953, 151; Williams 1973, 51.
72 Brevoort, " Almer and Weight Loss," July 12, 1868b.
73 Brevoort, "Alone in La Grave," July 17, 1874b.

apprehensive. A week later she wrote how 'Christian… is very sweet & charming now, but this is the valley. I truly hope his temper will not rise with the mountains.' Straton reassured her that she too fell out with her guide on occasions but as he understood her temper, they got along.[74] Their subsequent marriage presumably bears testament to this.

Women's relationships with their guides clearly were not always straightforward; they varied from necessary toleration to deep and lasting friendships. Regardless of personal feelings there had to be a working and valued relationship; both parties needed respect for each other and a degree of trust. The safety and enjoyment of the party depended upon it.

2.1.4 Challenging Propriety?

Whilst mutual trust and respect in the potentially dangerous environment of the mountains were important to both sexes, arguably they were more crucial for women. In a period when young, unmarried middle-class women were normally allowed male company only with a chaperone, several female mountaineers climbed alone; that is *with* a guide but *without* any accompanying friend or relative. These include Katherine Richardson, Elizabeth Le Blond, Beatrice Tomasson, Lily Bristow and Emily Hornby. Several others such as Havergal, the Pigeon sisters, Mary Isabella Straton and Frederica Plunket climbed with other women but no men. Hut registers and *führerbücher* record several groups of women-only parties.

Historian Carole Osborne feels the use of professional guides by women was in lieu of a chaperone, and therefore maintained the necessary propriety.[75] This seems unlikely for a number of reasons. First, it was normal for everyone, male or female, to use guides who were employed solely as skilled mountaineers, not for social protection or decorum. Second, chaperones were normally a family member, close friend or occasionally a long serving, trusted servant; guides, by contrast, were often not well known and frequently transitory. The Pigeon

[74] Brevoort , "Meeting of Women Climbers," July 26, 1874a.
[75] Osborne 2004, 162.

sisters, for example, used at least nine different guides in their eight years of serious climbing. Third, while chaperones generally were of the same social class as those in their care, guides, as mentioned earlier, were commonly working men from a lower social echelon. Finally, Havergal provides evidence that she, at least, did not view her guide as a suitable chaperone. Waiting for a friend to arrive so they could climb the Cima de Jazzi above Zermatt, she reassured her sister that 'I am not so demented as to go without a lady companion.'[76] The friend failed to materialise and Havergal abandoned her attempt. If guides were viewed as suitable chaperones, it also seems probable that Lucy Walker might not always have waited for her brother or father to accompany her. Anderegg, after all, was highly thought of not only by Lucy but also by her family and the wider climbing community. Evidence suggests women climbers used guides, as men did, for their mountaineering expertise and not reasons of propriety.

This is not to say that women always ignored social mores; Havergal and Walker are good examples of the care some women took over their arrangements. Furthermore, there was a general acknowledgment that women's needs were greater than men's. Plunket felt 'a good guide... indispensable to ladies' who were 'completely dependent both for security and comfort upon [their] services'.[77] While encouraging women to venture into the high mountains she notes that many women, by virtue of less strength and experience, required more help than men to negotiate difficult passages on rock and ice and so greater care was needed when choosing a guide. Several entries in the *führerbüche*r also recommend particular guides as good 'for ladies' suggesting there was an awareness that women mountaineers needed guides with specific attributes.[78]

Occasionally local guides, unused to women mountaineers, doubted their abilities as climbers. Fanny Richardson (Kate's sister) and Havergal both recount episodes of guides who viewed women as 'something very inferior'. Their patronising stance only eroded once women showed their capabilities as

[76] Crane 1881, 131.
[77] Plunket 1875, 20–21, 170–171.
[78] "Christian Jossi's Führerbüche" 1874, K28, AC, London; "Peter Bohren Führerbüche" 1855, L1, AC, London; "Christian Almer's Führerbüche" L7, AC, London.

mountaineers.[79] Anderegg quickly came to Hornby's aid to disabuse a local man of his presumption that the proposed route was too difficult for her.[80]

2.1.5 Overnight Stays.

As already noted there were women like Hornby who abjured any unnecessary 'fussing' because she was a woman. She is representative of the small group of women climbers who not only climbed alone but also slept overnight in caves, huts or even in the open in order to climb some of the highest peaks. In these situations everyone in the party was in close proximity. Some huts had a separate area for women or guides but many were merely one room. Caves and open-air camps were clearly communal affairs with no, or minimal, privacy. Richardson, Hornby and Le Blond are the most renowned women who commonly climbed in this way, but others such as Amy Passingham, Alice Fontaine, Anna Voigt, Katherine Parker, Edith Cooper and Margaret Urquhart figure among the otherwise unknown women whose testimonials appear in guides' *führerbüche*r.[81]

Despite these arrangements, which seemingly contravened contemporary notions of propriety, intriguingly there is little open criticism of women behaving in this way.[82] The AC journal, for example, lauded the Pigeon sisters' epic descent of the Sesia Joch and Richardson's various pioneering ascents. All of these demanded nights spent on the mountain in primitive conditions in close proximity to men with whom the women were unrelated and often knew only fleetingly – yet there is no hint of disapproval. The awareness that women were spending nights alone on the mountain with relative strangers was there – but little comment was made.

Why should this be the case? One possibility is that a more public discussion and therefore an even wider awareness may have brought unwelcome attention to mountaineering as a whole. Following the fatalities on the Matterhorn in 1865,

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79 Five Ladies 2003, 56; Crane 1881, 119.

80 Hornby 1907, 138.

81 "Ferdinand Imseng Führerbüche" 1863,K39; "Peter Bohren Führerbüche" 1855, L1; "Ulrich Kaufmann Führerbüche" 1871, O7; "Victor Furrer's Führerbüche" 1908, U10; "Alexander Burgener Führerbüche" 1880, K9. AC, London

82 A notable exception was in a review of Plunket's book in *Saturday Review* Feb 27, 1875:291-2.

climbing attracted much press criticism and AC members, in particular, found themselves called upon to defend their sport.[83] An accusation that women were not only climbing the same peaks but also compounding the danger by being unaccompanied may have added to their discomfort.

It is also possible that little mention is made of women sharing huts with relative strangers, because it was more commonplace than previously thought and therefore did not warrant any comment. If that was the case it complicates or even subverts conventional historiographical understanding of middle-class mores at this time. A letter to *The Times* shortly after the Matterhorn disaster in 1865 remarked on 'the great...number of "unprotected females" one meets at every step on these mountains.' The correspondent, although admitting surprise, admired the young women - (he stressed they were all 'Misses') – who relied on guides 'and fought their own battles and managed their own affairs better than a husband or "governor" could have done for them.'[84] Marion Nielsen in 1874 also commented how ' all travellers in Switzerland talk...about those courageous young ladies who annually do so much climbing.'[85]

This suggests that a number of women willingly abandoned certain aspects of social etiquette once among the mountains and met with surprisingly little criticism for doing so. These women were clearly demonstrating a willingness and ability to forsake propriety, to have autonomy, independence and to act as they, rather than society, deemed fit. Again, there appears to be almost a compartmentalising – one 'way of being' in towns and 'civilisation' and another for wilder, more remote country.

2.1.6 Domestic Duties.

Although the guide's principal role was to lead on the mountain, they also were responsible for the party's general well-being. This meant ensuring there was sufficient food, drink, and other provisions necessary to sustain the group for the

[83] "Editorial – Accident on the Matterhorn," *The Times*, July 27,1865.
[84] Holiday Correspondent, "Alpine Tourists," *The Times*, October 2, 1865.
[85] Five Ladies 2003, 54.

duration of the expedition as well as ensuring a place to spend the night. On occasions, this could lead to more intimate situations than commonly seen elsewhere. Havergal, for example, on reaching the Grand Mulets described how, 'Payot [her guide] acted lady's maid and took off my boots and stockings and kindly lent me a pair of his own enormous worsted socks, warm and dry.'[86] Hornby, sleeping overnight in a primitive hut in the Dauphiné, recalled how Anderegg made a bed for her of 'a woollen covering' on top of straw and then put another over her once she lay down.[87] These activities are hard to imagine men routinely undertaking for middle-class women in Britain at this time.

Guides also helped with clothing problems. Wet clothes were a common issue and various tactics were employed to deal with them. Sometimes, as the Spence-Watsons discovered, the only recourse was to go to bed whilst the guide attempted to dry them.[88] Plunket's guide favoured 'a blazing fire' in front of which she and her sister rotated. 'Clouds of steam' and a 'vapoury atmosphere' were the result.[89] When climbing women often removed so many layers of clothing they were left just in petticoats. Havergal described to her sister how, 'we took off every possible thing even the skirts of our dresses and I proceeded with simply my grey linen unlined body on.'[90] For women to feel comfortable in this relative state of undress presupposed a trust and understanding with guides and porters. This was part of the give and take of being a member of a climbing expedition, but such behaviour provides further indication of the different 'rules' that applied high amongst the mountains.

2.2.Huts

Overnight arrangements could be particularly intimate especially when they did not go according to plan. The Spence-Watsons found the hut they arrived at above Zermatt had not opened after the winter - much of it was full of snow. They excavated a certain amount but there was too much and it was too late in the day for anything other than creating enough space for the group to squeeze in and make do. They managed to create a meal and then settled in for the night.

[86] Crane 1881, 214.
[87] Hornby 1906, 28.
[88] "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson" July 9th 1863.
[89] Plunket 1875, 20.
[90] Crane 1881, 140.

> Imagine our situation – eleven human beings were cooped up in that one half of a little hut in a space 6 feet high by 14 feet long & 9 feet wide….in addition to the stench of [Lochmatters] soup was the tobacco smoke of the guides. Truly it was not comfortable but it was passing strange. The howling of the wind round the chalet, the beating of the angry storm upon the panes, the wild songs and uncertain shapes of the guide in shade, and the dark outlines of those in the firelight the sense of isolation from the habitable & inhabited world contribute to make it a season to be long remembered.[91]

Elizabeth Spence-Watson was the only woman in the group, as was Lucy Walker when her party of seven also experienced a similarly cramped and primitive overnight stay. Fellow climber A W Moore recalled how,

> The herdsman received us civilly and showed us a hayloft over the cow house which proved to be free from insects and in fact, unusually comfortable.. after a meagre meal we took up our positions side by side and courted sleep.[92]

Walker, although careful to maintain a sense of femininity in her dress and deportment, nevertheless embraced what was commonly termed 'roughing'.[93] It was impossible to climb the major peaks she achieved without 'camping out' and sleeping 'side by side'. The insects Moore discretely referred to were probably fleas – a constant problem in the many remote chalets frequently used by mountaineers and mentioned by other women climbers.[94]

The important point is that women, despite restrictions that may have been prevalent in Britain, on the mountain were members of a team. As such, they sometimes slept close to men they barely knew, shared the cold, the damp and flea infestations, divided their diminishing supplies of food and drink and partook of whatever hardship, or delight, that came their way. When expeditions overran food became scarce. Jackson's party, for example, had only a small amount of cheese and a few raisins to sustain them in their impromptu overnight camp in a glacial cave. Brevoort's party in similar circumstances had no food and

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91 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," June 29th 1863.
92 Moore, "1870 Journal", June 23rd. AC, London.
93 Plunket 1875, 174.
94 "Journal Elizabeth Spence -Watson," July 3, 1863; Brevoort, "To her sister from Belalp," July 10, 1867a.

only a dribble of wine.[95] Several women were served dinner delicacies of slugs, squirrels and brains.[96] Mountaineering was full of such vicissitudes and the relationship with guides and porters had to be such that it could withstand the experience. This required understanding on both sides.



Figure 39. A 'Wooden' Studio photo of Mary Isabella Straton and Jean Charlet, far right. Late 1860s, Chamonix. (Clark 1953, 169).

2.3.Husbands and Wives

Not all climbing groups consisted of single people; a significant number of parties contained married couples. Indeed, mountaineering was a pastime enjoyed by several husbands and wives, some meeting their future spouse through social connections made when climbing. Annie Pasteur (1861-1946), for example, whose family stemmed from Switzerland married George Morse (1857-1931), a later president of the Alpine Club. Mabel Peyton, the daughter of another AC member, married Norman Neruda an accomplished alpinist with several first ascents. The year after their marriage in 1892, a time when guideless climbing was becoming more popular, the Nerudas climbed the whole season without any guides – just the two of them alone on the hill. As mentioned previously, one of the most renowned, but unusual, unions was Mary Isabel

95 Jackson, "A Winter Quartette," *Alpine Journal* 14, (1889); 200-210; Coolidge, "A Day and a Night on the Bietschhorn," *Alpine Journal* 6 (1872) 114-124.

96 Coolidge ibid 114, 116; Le Blond 1883, 116; "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," July 5th 1863.

Straton and guide Jean Charlet, seen in Figure 39. Mumm's Alpine directory records many other more ordinary examples of couples who shared a love of climbing.[97]

In these companionate marriages there is a sense that sharing the varied experiences and mixed fortunes of mountaineering strengthened the relationship.



Figure 40. Robert and Elizabeth Spence Watson, 1863.[98]

The Spence-Watson's diary provides a rare opportunity to observe such a relationship in detail and to witness a shared love of the mountains. In Britain, they climbed extensively in the Lake District and occasionally in Wales; Striding Edge and Scafell Pike were common undertakings.[99] The Alps, however, took their climbing to another level. Together they experienced bitter cold and snowstorms, the crossing of rivers and exquisite sunrises. They shared the desperate feeling of getting up at 'the unearthly hour of one [a.m]', followed by the mesmerising beauty of an alpine skyline at dawn and the unalloyed joy of stepping onto an unclimbed summit.[100]

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97 Mumm 1923.
98 http://benbeck.co.uk/fh/richardson.
99 Beck 2011.
100 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson", July 6th 1863, July 3rd 1864.

Mountaineering was almost unique in providing such opportunities for couples, where normal everyday life was abandoned for a few weeks and more basic lifestyles indulged in. Moreover, it was a situation where husband and wife were on an equal footing for, as already highlighted, the interdependence of members in a climbing party was paramount. Robert Spence-Watson was clearly proud of his wife. He wrote,

> I found my dear wife had a firm foot and was as good a climber as ever I came across. Many and many a time we have seen her undertake difficult descents alone which were really serious....On one occasion we did 23 peaks and passes in 21 days, and out of these some four or five were new ones.[101]

The joy in both planning and executing their Alpine excursions is palpable.

> I well remember the delight there was before we went away on holiday in Switzerland, laying out our plans and deciding what mountains and passes we should take.[102]

There were other dedicated husband and wife teams – Charles and Mabel Pilkington, Edward and Margaret Jackson, Stephen and Emma Winkworth, the Lemans and the Alston Bishops are a few examples – but unfortunately, none of their journals have survived. From Mumm's AC Register, however, it seems most of these men, once married, only climbed with their wives. Excursions they previously made with male friends largely ended.[103]

This suggests that many of these wives were climbing at a similar level to their husbands; otherwise it seems likely that at least some of these men would have arranged separate, more demanding expeditions for themselves alone. Stephen Winkworth's experience confirms this; he climbed from 1856 but achieved his first major peak with his wife in 1861. Indeed, in a few relationships the woman was the main instigator of expeditions. Jane Quentin Freshfield, as mentioned previously, was generally fitter than her husband and played the leading role in their family's excursions. It was she, rather than her husband, who was

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101 Spence Watson 1969, 24.
102 Spence Watson 1969, 24.
103 Mumm 1923.

responsible for introducing her son to alpinism.[104] Secondly, it highlights the convivial and companionate relationship many couples had; mountaineering was a way of enjoying that companionship away from the demands and constraints of everyday life. Admittedly, the choice of these couples to undertake such strenuous and sometimes dangerous adventures makes them a self-selected group. But it seems reasonable to speculate that the greater equality possible on the mountain appealed to both sexes; men relieved for a time of the role of patriarchal protector and women free from some of society's restrictions. It seems likely mountaineering allowed for a looser, more relaxed and informal relationship, not only between husband and wife but also, as already seen, between other members of the climbing group.

3. Summary

The climbing party frequently contained a disparate blend of people who varied in class, gender and occupation. Perhaps this eclectic mix prompted Brevoort to call her group 'a funny-looking party'. Despite such diversity, they operated as a team, united temporarily by their common purpose. Their unifying aim, often pursued under inclement conditions with much privation, seems to have strengthened the group's bond.

The mountains presented ever-changing conditions to which responses were necessary if passes were to be crossed and summits safely reached. As Gertrude Bell commented, the greatest danger in mountaineering was to be slow. For the safety of the whole group, everyone, including women, needed a certain level of fitness and agility. Many women responded to the challenge, despite prevailing medical opinion and a myriad of advice manuals for the 'gentler' sex.

This thesis, whilst a case study of a particular group, has a wider discursive purpose: to challenge the way certain received views of Victorian middle-class women's lives and capabilities have sometimes been taken as adequate accounts of their lived experience. Clearly theory and practice were often diverse. Although it is important not to extrapolate too much from a relatively narrow range of sources, it equally should not be assumed that norms of behaviour were

[104] Freshfield 1861, 30–33.

always invariable, regardless of the setting. The consistent popularity of mountaineering over the last forty years of the nineteenth century, with the growing number of women participants, ensures a certain constancy and validity to their experiences.

In some sense, the fluctuating demands of the mountains taught women the possibilities and the limits of their own capabilities – physically, mentally and socially. The high mountains pushed people of both sexes close to their maximum. Mountaineer and philosopher, Phil Bartlett, terms it a 'return to the primitive' – a journey back to the most basic demands of life, to survive against the elements, to find food and shelter.[105] The extreme demand of Alpinism enhanced women's knowledge and awareness of their body's capabilities– probably in a way they had not encountered before. As De Beauvoir maintained this could be a liberating force. It is to the embodied nature of this sense of freedom that I now turn.

[105] Bartlett 1993.

Chapter 6. 'A Sense of Freedom'

The identity and identification of women mountaineers.

'There is a buoyancy, a sense of freedom, an exhilaration in the atmosphere at those heights' wrote Grace Hirst after climbing Mont Blanc, in 1874.[1] Many women expressed similar feelings of overwhelming liberty and independence in the mountains. What, however, was meant by this exactly? What role did the idea and sense of emancipation play in affecting women's lives either in the mountains or at home? This chapter explores the relationship between this confessed 'sense of freedom' with how women viewed and portrayed themselves and how others perceived them.

The public and private perceptions of nationalism and gender; different political, religious and community affiliations; types of dress, writing and embodiment, all seem at first glance to be an oddly eclectic mixture, but they interact, as will become evident, to construct the various identities of women mountaineers. Additionally the issues and interests that motivated women to travel to the mountains, for example, physical exercise, aesthetics, exploration, geology, botany or simply to escape, for a time, from their lives in Britain were integral to the sense of who women climbers were and their place in society.

1.The Problem of 'Identity'

There is a difficulty, however, with using the simple term 'identity.' Sociologist Rogers Brubaker and historian Frederick Cooper have convincingly demonstrated that 'identity' is a blunt analytical instrument for unravelling the varying components that construct an individual at any given moment in time.[2] They maintain that in its 'strong,' essentialist sense, identity can mean too much. For example, it conveys the notion that all people and all groups must possess a singular identity, unbending and permanent over time. It might also suggest group members share a homogenous experience that creates a sharp distinction

[1] Five Ladies 2003, 58.
[2] Brubaker and Cooper 2000.

and boundary between members and non-members of a group. By contrast, in its 'weak' constructivist sense, 'identity' is hedged with so many qualifiers – words such as varied, fluid, relative, constructed and unstable – that the sheer number of contingencies can render the 'identity' so ambiguous as to be meaningless. [3]

Brubaker and Cooper suggest the concept of identity, as an analytical tool, is more usefully broken down into three separate aspects; a framework I propose to use for this chapter.[4] The first of these is 'Identification and Categorisation'. 'Identification', they propose, does not have the reifying connotation of 'identity' but is more active, concerned with what, or who, is doing the identifying. It is a dynamic *process* rather than a passive *thing*. As such, it allows for variability, for how someone identifies themselves and how they are identified by others, also for how either of these may change in different social, political or geographical contexts. Identification often contains some categorisation – for example, membership of a class, nationality, gender or race. Classifying is often associated with the workings of the state but society also employs the use of groupings, although in more subtle ways. Goffmann, Hacking and Bourdieu, in differing ways, all invoke the use of groups to explain various constructions of the self.[5] Other nuanced modes of identification can be carried by both serious discourse as well as popular narrative: journalist's articles, political diatribes, as well as works of fiction and the opinions of close friends and associates all influence ways of thinking, talking and understanding that contribute to forming an identity. Such a construction is a more hidden, psychodynamic type of identification; the self aligns *with* an opinion or interest rather than *as* someone who fits a particular description.

The second area proposed by Brubaker and Cooper is 'self-understanding and social location.' This embraces the more reflective aspect of identity – a person's internal notion of who they are, what they are capable of and how this may vary under differing circumstances. It is the practical sense people have of themselves and their social world. Whereas self-understanding is internal, hidden and only

[3] Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 9–10.
[4] Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 14–21.
[5] Bourdieu 1977; Goffman 1990; Hacking 1986.

displayed implicitly, such awareness, nevertheless, affects the way people reveal themselves to the outside world materially, cognitively and emotionally.

The final category that contributes towards a more analytical understanding of identity is 'commonality, connectedness and groupness.' This provides an umbrella under which various forms of connectivity can be analysed – from groups of people strongly bonded together to looser affiliations. Commonality is the sharing of similar attributes or interests, whereas connectedness denotes the relational ties that link people as well as the more intangible 'feeling of belonging'. Benedict Anderson's renowned work *Imagined Communities* (1983) has suggested how people, who do not actually know each other, nevertheless come together because of perceived shared interests or values. This might be due to nationality, religion, politics and gender or a passion for some particular sport or hobby. How tightly bonded together a group is and how much people are identified with it, is determined by the degree of commonality or connectedness that exists.

These three categories provide a useful structure for analysing the varying components of the lives, motivations and representations of women climbers in the second half of the nineteenth century. The flexibility of Brubaker and Cooper's model allows for a more pragmatic approach to the issue of identity, which recognises the inevitable plurality involved.

2.Identification

Historian, Peter Hansen, has written that women climbed 'to represent....their independence from traditional femininity.'[6] Even if evidence supported this claim, it would still need demonstrating that a singular, homogenous, and widespread identity of 'traditional femininity' existed. Women's magazines in the period 1850-1900, which reflect the interests of middle-class womanhood, show that femininity was never such a monolithic entity; even at its most normative it always contained a plurality. These publications, for example, contain mixed and often contrasting messages concerning such issues as women's rights, politics,

[6] Hansen 1991, 13.

behaviour and education.[7] It is unsurprising then that women's own self–representations, including those of female climbers, reflect this diversity.

2.1Dual Identity.

Even those with a cursory knowledge of the nineteenth century will be familiar with accounts of Victorian men leading complex, often double, lives. Stevenson's 1886 fictional story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is the most extreme and well-known instance of such double identity. Arthur Munby's secret marriage to the servant girl Hannah Cullwick is a real, rather than fictional, example.[8] Although Munby's story was very unusual, it did typify a familiar double existence experienced by other, more ordinary men, between the world of business and their club on the one hand, and life at home on the other.[9]The idea that some women experienced a duality in their lives, similar to these more conventional men, is unfamiliar yet there is good evidence that many women climbers identified themselves differently depending on their environment.

Lucy Walker is a prime example; from her first visit to the Alps with her brother and father in 1858, she was a member of the climbing party not her mother's group that remained in the village. Her family supported her in this. Well known throughout the Alps, many people were keen to meet this pioneering female alpinist.[10] Although clearly seeing herself as a serious climber Walker nevertheless retained an obvious femininity. Climbing the Rimpfischorn, for example, she rode a mule for the first couple of hours whilst all the men walked.[11] Fellow climber Claude Schuster wrote how she always left the village or hotel in a crinoline, before leaving it behind a rock to continue climbing.[12] Whilst a more detailed consideration of dress occurs later in the chapter, a studio photograph (Figure 41) certainly portrays Walker in typically feminine array. More striking than this, however, is the sharp difference that is alleged to have

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7 For a comprehensive study of women's magazines see Beetham 1996.
8 Atkinson 2003; Cullwick 1984; Hudson 1972.
9 Francis 2002; Tosh 2007; Roper and Tosh 1991, 44–73.
10 Whymper, "Two Lady Climbers," *Girls Own Paper*, December 15,1885, 166.
11 Moore 1939, 2:220.
12 Schuster 1931, 61.

existed between her life in the Alps, with its strenuous physicality and privation, and that which she led at home in England.



Figure 41. Lucy Walker, behind her mother and Miss Hughes with father Frank & brother Horace and guide Melchior Anderegg with rope circa 1862 (AC Library).

Accounts of her life in Liverpool mention Walker running the family home, being a good needlewoman, excellent linguist and welcoming hostess – all attributes associated with the female domestic sphere.[13] Croquet, apparently, was the only sport she played. In the Alps, she may have been a mountaineer but at home in England she appears to have identified with the stereotypical role of a middle-class Victorian lady.

Walker left no diaries or journals to corroborate reports of this apparently conflicting dual existence. Nevertheless, she does not seem to have climbed in

13 Gardiner, "In Memoriam. Miss Lucy Walker," *Alpine Journal*, (31) 1917: 97-102; Williams 1973, 42–45.

Britain. Her brother, Horace, with whom she climbed extensively in the Alps and lived with all her life, was instrumental in starting AC meets in Lakeland and North Wales from 1878.[14] Unfortunately, there are no records of who exactly attended these gatherings so it is impossible to be certain if Lucy participated, but accounts of the meets do not mention her attendance. Whilst it is puzzling that someone who clearly loved the mountains would not visit her local hills, none of those who knew her mentioned she did; instead, they stress her femininity and lack of interest in women's 'situation'.[15] Walker, it seems, kept mountaineering and the distinctive identity that accompanied it only for the Alps; in England, she appears to have conformed to a more predictable female role.

Admittedly not all female alpinists made such a sharp demarcation between their lives at home and abroad as Walker did – but nearly all of them made similar distinctions between life above the snowline and that below. As women came down from the high mountains and re-entered the villages most re-arranged their dress and appearance to conform to the expected female image of the period. When climbing they often removed many layers of clothing, commonly down to one petticoat and a bodice.[16] Long hours of strenuous exercise, sometimes coupled with a night in a cave or out in the open, naturally left its mark. Once near 'civilisation', however, most women were keen to present a tidier image more associated with their sex than that of the hardened mountaineer. Hornby, for example, might have spent a night sharing a rough hut high on the glacier with other male climbers and her guides, but on returning to the village she was careful to 'let her dress down,' and delighted in ordering a hot bath.[17]

Above the snowline, away from habitation, women were free from society's gendered expectations. Here, the mountain and its weather determined life's

[14] "Alpine Meeting," *Alpine Journal* , 9 (1879): 176; "Alpine Meeting," *Alpine Journal*, 10 (1881): 282; For a consideration of how rock climbing developed in Lakeland largely after the birth of alpinism see Westaway 2013.
[15] Engel 1950, 136; Williams 1973, 42.
[16] Crane 1881, 119,140.
[17] Hornby 1907, 100, 110, 121.

practicalities; society's sophistications were laid aside in favour of the more simple identity of a mountaineer – a role in which gender was less important than ability. Above the snowline women's identity was that of a climber, below it they mainly reverted to 'being a lady.'

2.2 As Women.

Women like the Pigeon sisters, Katherine Richardson, and Elizabeth Spence-Watson clearly had ability as mountaineers and thought of themselves as committed climbers. Yet they, like Hornby, also retained a distinct and self-conscious aura of femininity. There is no evidence to suggest they were trying, in any way, to assume a 'manly' demeanour. Richardson, for example, refused to wear breeches even towards the end of her climbing career when 'new women' climbers such as Menie Muriel Dowie and Gertrude Bell were making it more common.[18] Spence-Watson's journals are a reminder that she was a mother as well as a mountaineer. She makes several references to her daughter Mabel, with whom she looks forward to climbing in years ahead.[19] Figure 42 demonstrates the later realisation of that aspiration.



Figure 42. Elizabeth & Robert Spence-Watson with daughters Ruth and Bertha, 1898 (Ben Beck).

[18] Paillon, "Miss K. Richardson," *La Montagne*, 23, (1927): 330.
[19] "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," July 17th 1865.

As daughters, mothers and sisters most women were keenly aware of family responsibilities. This sometimes restricted them in a way that is not as noticeable for men. Katherine Richardson, for example, felt unable to extend her climbing into the Caucasus and New Zealand at a time when many male contemporaries, who also had families, were doing exactly that.[20] Meta Brevoort, sacrificed her own climbing, on occasions, to allow her nephew extra funds for an expedition.[21] Havergal constantly felt the need to reassure her sister she was safe and not undertaking anything dangerous.[22] This all resonates with a female identity synonymous with caring, the family, nurturing and self-sacrifice; one sheltered within a safe environment, free from external dangers.

Not all women, however, experienced these demands. Le Blond for example, showed little concern for her relations in Britain. She ignored her great-aunt's remonstrations to give up climbing and throughout her life showed remarkably little affinity for her family – including her three husbands and only child.[23] She spent much of her life living in Switzerland. By 1866 Straton's close family had all died leaving little to keep her in Britain. She left England in 1876, and what remained of her family, to marry Jean Charlet.[24] Prior to this date letters address her as Mary whereas afterwards she is known, almost exclusively, by her second name Isabella. It is as if the renaming is a conscious act to mark her new life and identity in France; an opportunity to break from the family sadness she experienced in Britain and begin afresh. Later, even Richardson's family ties loosened when she went to live with her friend, Mary Paillon, in France.[25]

2.3 Travellers.

As detailed in chapter two faster and cheaper travel, from mid-century, had a democratising effect on Alpine holidays. No longer just the province of the very wealthy, from the 1860s self-made businessmen and lower middle-class workers

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20 Dronsart 1894.
21 Williams 1973, 52.
22 Crane 1881, 115, 119, 133.
23 Hansen 2010; E.L.S 1934.
24 Parents Robert & Mary Straton, from Willsbridge Gloucestershire ,died in 1851 & 1856 respectively. Her elder sister Frances died 3 weeks after her father. Remaining sister Emily died in 1866.
25 Paillon, "Miss K Richardson," *La Montagne*, 23 (1927): 326-332.

began to contemplate Thomas Cook's tours to Europe and the Alps.[26]This encouraged and expanded a pre-existing elitist division between 'tourists' and 'travellers'

Women mountaineers, no less than their male counterparts, regarded themselves more as travellers than tourists. While the motivation for some women to go to remote places was social exclusivity, for most it was more complex. For many women independent travel provided a sharp distinction from their role at home where reliance on men and deference to society's mores was the general rule. Having an identity as a freethinking traveller was a significant part of climbing. It sanctioned, or at least reflected, a spirit of more original, adventurous, unsupervised conduct. Havergal 'felt like a boy' as she explored around Zermatt jumping 'snow torrents.'[27] Being a traveller allowed women, like Walker, to move into her alternative mountain existence. As a traveller in the hills, Havergal had a different identity to that of the hymn writer; Hornby and Richardson's role as independent climbers overshadowed their place as vicar's daughters. The aristocratic lineage of Frederica Plunket and Elizabeth Le Blond almost seemed an irrelevance in the face of their much stronger self-identification as mountaineers.

Historian, James Buzard, recognized that travel produced 'the fashioning of these special identities' but whereas he suggests they offered merely 'an imaginative freedom', the case of women mountaineers clearly shows that their freedom was anything but imaginary; it was a tangible, real and sought after experience.[28] Moreover, the manifestation of these different identities reinforces Hacking's assertion that lived experience can create a person, even as that same person must choose to make, or allow, that opportunity to occur. Clearly this was something particularly relevant for nineteenth-century women climbers.[29]

[26] Buzard 1993, 55–57; Morrell 1998.
[27] Crane 1881, 133.
[28] Buzard 1993, 81.
[29] Hacking 2011.

The independence that was inextricably associated with being a 'traveller' entailed deciding on itineraries, organising logistics and, for the mountaineer, engaging guides and porters. Several women climbers, as noted previously, displayed their social superiority and authority when dealing with guides; they assumed the identity of a slightly imperious employer. The social distinction they drew was similar to that imagined difference between traveller and tourist; it displayed their habitus.[30] This slightly aloof stance may have had the added benefit of keeping a sense of respectability; of ensuring guides kept their distance, a way of underlining that although female, and characterised as the 'weaker sex,' they nevertheless possessed power, knowledge and authority, in both a financial and social sense. The situation was clearly complex for although life above the snowline often meant a loosening, even at times abandonment, of the normal rules of propriety, there seems a definite recognition, by some, of women's potential vulnerability.

This attitude, however, must not be overstated. As already discussed, many women had excellent, friendly relationships with guides, porters, hoteliers and curés. Frederica Plunket particularly abhorred the 'intolerance displayed yearly in Switzerland [between] the various classes' and urged greater forbearance by everyone.[31] Le Blond wrote the first three chapters of one of her books expressly to celebrate the quality of guides and the occasional deplorable attitudes of their employers.[32]

2.4 Politics and Religion.

Until the 1880s, it seems most women mountaineers did not see themselves in the vanguard of the developing women's rights movement in Britain; Walker, it is claimed, had no interest in 'the status of women.'[33] There were, however, some notable exceptions, Millicent Fawcett being one and Mary Taylor (Figure 43) another. Taylor, a friend of Charlotte Bronte, was an early feminist, fiercely

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[30] Bourdieu 1977,72-95, 159-197; Lovell 2000, 27.
[31] Plunket 1875, 12.
[32] Main 1892, 1–39.
[33] Williams 1973, 42.

independent, and passionate believer that women should earn their own money.[34]



Figure 43. Mary Taylor circa 1880. [35]

While few were so publicly supportive of women's independence as Taylor and Fawcett, many women climbers, nevertheless, came from homes that backed greater equality for the sexes or veered towards a more radical and questioning stance. Emma Winkworth, was brought up in a family that supported universal suffrage, chartism and the anti-corn law league. The daughters of novelist Elizabeth Gaskell, whose books focussed on women's role in society and the plight of the poor, were mountaineers;[36] they attempted the Meije in 1880.[37] Meta Brevoort did not comment directly about women's status but her forthright actions, opinions and independence provide a strong indication of her views.[38] She and Gaskell, for example, met with and were supporters of Harriet Beecher Stowe. Other women such as Bertha Wills, Jane Freshfield, and Mary de la Beche Nicholl came from Quaker, Unitarian or similar nonconformist backgrounds. There is a sense that the majority of women mountaineers were sympathetic to

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[34] Taylor 1870.

[35] www.kirklees.gov.uk/events/documents/RedHouse-MaryTaylor.pdf

[36] Mary Taylor knew Gaskell and communicated with her often, particularly with regard to Bronte's biography. see Bellamy 2002.

[37] Pilkington, "Letter to William Coolidge," October 17, 1880.

[38] Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes," *Annuaire de Club Alpin Francais*, 26,(1899): 273-296.

the push for greater gender equality occurring in Britain even if they left little written evidence.

Quaker, Elizabeth Spence-Watson, is one of the few whose diaries and memoirs have survived. Before her marriage in 1863, and for forty years subsequently, she was secretary to the Ragged School for Girls; with her husband, she later founded the girl's High School in Gateshead and actively petitioned for women's entry to Cambridge, eventually seeing her eldest daughter enter Newnham. As the century progressed, like several women, she became increasingly politically active, founding the Newcastle Women's Liberal Association in 1886 and later the Newcastle suffrage society.[39] She clearly saw herself as someone with a social, and eventually, a political responsibility; it formed an essential element of her identity and personality. While not everyone was as actively involved in women's education and political rights as Spence-Watson, nevertheless, she represents a distinct element within female mountaineering that had an egalitarian outlook.

However for many, even most women mountaineers, who wrote little, it is impossible to be certain about their political or religious opinions. Accounts of many of the leading women climbers – Richardson, Jackson and Hornby, for example, – give no indication of their views. It is a reminder not to assume that merely because they all enjoyed mountaineering they shared similar opinions on other matters, even if these appear to corroborate the independence and autonomy inherent in climbing. Like their male counterparts, women climbers do not always form a cohesive, uniform entity.

Nevertheless, several authors cast all female climbers – from Meta Brevoort and the Pigeon sisters to Gertrude Bell – as, according to Hansen, 'representatives of the so-called New Woman of the turn of the century.'[40] This clearly is mistaken not least because this phenomenon, although arguably having antecedents in the women's movement in the mid-nineteenth century, only truly began in the

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[39] Beck 2013.
[40] Craig 2013, 12; Hansen 1991, 311 ; Williams 1973, 42.

1880s, when Brevoort was already dead, and reached its apogee at the end of the century.[41] Furthermore, the term, 'new woman' itself is problematic. As historian Sally Ledger explained, it has many contradictory meanings.[42] For example, it simultaneously stands for women who were loose, sexual predators, and for those who were chaste and independent or mannish and asexual; for those who 'trapped' men and for those who ignored them. Its more unchallenged depiction was of a university-educated woman, someone who worked professionally or clerically through choice rather than necessity, who lived independently from family making her own decisions and often refused the mantle of motherhood. It is noticeable that the increased employment of middle-class women in the 1890s coincided with growing numbers of female climbers; the greater social opportunities and independence experienced by some women probably found a connection with the self-reliance and autonomy inherent to mountaineering.[43] To label all climbers at this time 'new women', however, would be assuming too much – for many all we know are their names and nothing about their political views.

Nonetheless, from 1890, there were women who fitted the clichéd description of new women. The Oxford educated Gertrude Bell, the Girton lecturer Maud Meyer, and author and traveller Menie Muriel Dowie, are notable examples.[44] These women, whilst identifying themselves as mountaineers, also saw themselves, respectively, as a historian, mathematician and writer. Crucially, unlike most climbers in the 1860s and 1870s that Hansen referred to, these women had public identities outside the world of home and climbing.

2.5 How Others Identified Women Climbers .

There were enormous variations in how different observers viewed and described women climbers. Such diverse viewpoints played significant roles in contributing to women's multiple identities. Some male mountaineers, as already

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[41] Ledger 1997; Richardson and Willis 2002; Showalter 1991.

[42] Ledger 1997, 10.

[43] Climbing records submitted for admission to the Ladies Alpine Club in 1907, show that many women were regular mountaineers in the 1890s.

[44] Creese 2004; Dowie 1891; E.L.S, "In Memoriam, Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell," *Alpine Journal*, 38 (1926):296-299.

noted, preferred to see Alpine climbing as purely for men whilst others were keen to encourage wives, daughters and female friends to join them in the high mountains.[45] Le Blond's great aunt felt she was embarrassing the family with her mountaineering whilst women such as Fawcett, Richardson, Hornby and the innumerable women who climbed with brothers and husbands clearly faced no such family criticism.

Press coverage also often gave mixed messages. Newspapers frequently chose to identify women as 'plucky Brits' upholding the country's pioneering and questing nature; they stressed the fitness, superior behaviour and appearance of 'English ladies' in contrast to other nationalities.[46] There is a sense, however, that there were limitations to the amount of encouragement to be given to women. Despite praising their independence and prowess at walking and climbing, newspapers covered very few challenging ascents made by women. Although *Punch* wrote a poem in honour of Walker's first female climb of the Matterhorn in 1871, *The Times* omitted any mention of this unprecedented ascent – even though it published a traverse of the mountain, completed at exactly the same time, by a man.[47]

A tolerant view in the press of women's presence as mountaineers seemed to have limits. It was apparently fine, in some newspaper accounts, for women to be fit and superior to the 'fairer sex' of other nationalities but the prospect they might have similar abilities to fellow English *men* was evidently regarded as more unacceptable. One reason for the lack of coverage may lie in unease that publicising women's mountaineering exploits might subvert the stereotypical female role as mothers and custodians of the home. *Pearson's Magazine*, for example, which became renowned for its socialist views and innovative literature, and so possibly more open than other periodicals to new developments, nevertheless, belittled 'women as mountaineers.' It claimed they

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45 Schutz Wilson 1878; Stephen 1904; Wills 1858.
46 A Tourist , "Letter to the Editor," *The Times*, September 5,1854; Holiday Correspondent, "Alpine Tourists," *The Times*, October 2,1865;"Mountaineering. Hotel Des Alpes, Chamonix," *The Times* , August 23,1872.
47 "A Climbing Girl," *Punch*, August 26, 1871; Utterson-Kelso, "An Alpine Feat, *The Times*, September 9, 1871.

had 'achieved no brilliant successes' and their exploits would 'indeed scarcely be called mountaineering...by expert climbers.'[48]

Women's magazines might be expected to show a more supportive stance for female mountaineers. Historian Margaret Beetham's work certainly demonstrates how these publications catered for very wide interests and incomes. Such multiplicity highlights the diverse nature of the cultural representations of femininity; portrayals that were neither singular nor immutable but frequently shifted.[49] These women's magazines simultaneously both reflected and created the culture and discourse surrounding femininity. They trod a fine line between serving the stereotypical interests of home, fashion and its associated consumerism, and more challenging coverage of literature, news and politics. Outdoors activities had a constant, if limited, presence from the early 1880s.[50] Edward Whymper, for example, wrote a series of articles for the *Girls Own Paper* about women who travelled, explored and generally led more exceptional lives. Included in this was a piece on Le Blond and Walker.[51] Mention of the mountaineering expeditions of Queen Margherita of Italy as well as the exploits of more lowly young English girls pepper various women's periodicals.[52]

The many possible points of identification available to female climbers create a complex picture. On the one hand, middle and upper class society often accepted women, albeit tangentially, as part of a legitimate mountaineering group. There was even a sense of pride that *British* women had the courage to attempt such adventurous activities. On the other hand there was a reticence to go further and give detailed coverage of their climbs. Of course, if they did it would become clear that some women were climbing the same routes and peaks as many men and, indeed, in a few cases in advance of them. This could threaten the popular perception that mountaineering was quintessentially male, undermine the

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48 Tindal, "Lady Mountaineer," *Pearson's Magazine*, 7, (1899): 354-364.
49 Beetham 1996, 4.
50 "The Mer de Glace in the Swiss Alps,"*The Ladies Treasury: A Household Magazine,* September 1, 1888.
51 Whymper, "Two Lady Climbers," *Girls Own Paper*, December 15, 1885.
52 "How Two Girls Attempted the Breithorn," *Girls Own Paper*, July 23, 1881; "Queen of Italy," *Women's Penny Paper* , August 24,1889; "Lady Mountaineer," *Women's Penny Paper,* December 6, 1890; "Mountaineering Monarch, *Woman's Herald*, September 7,1893.

notion that women were incapable of sustained strenuous exercise, and highlight a degree of female independence and autonomy that many in society were unprepared for. It is useful to recall that most newspaper and periodical editors, even of women's magazines, were male.[53] Their livelihood depended on attracting advertisements and subscriptions. It did not pay to stray too far from society's mores.

To outside observers of the mountaineering world, female climbers were seen to hold ambiguous identities. They straddled two almost incompatible positions. On the one hand they were praised for courage, individuality, strength and fortitude but on the other, because they were women, their identity needed to project an element of fragility, dependence and weakness. This collision of opposites, which mirrors the dual life experienced by many women mountaineers, may explain the relative lack of publicity surrounding women's climbing in the nineteenth century compared to men. Sociologist Charles Tilly maintained that identity was relational and not merely an internal or personal phenomenon.[54] It depended on public representation through groups, networks, organisational roles and ties. In this context, the relative lack of coverage of women's climbing compared to men's contributed to the weakening of women's public identity as mountaineers. Historians researching Alpinism have largely accepted published reports and news coverage of the period as an accurate representation of those who were actually mountaineering; hence, the perpetuation of the myth that women were rarely seen in the high mountains.

3. Self Understanding and Social Location

This aspect of Brubaker and Cooper's notion of identity is concerned with the personal, internal, cognitive and emotional sense of who someone is; of how a person understands their place in the world. For women climbers in the last half of the nineteenth century such an understanding involved a reappraisal, or even an awakening, of the potential hidden within their own body. More specifically, it involved knowing how they could relate and react, both mentally and physically, to the particular environment of the mountains. Here again De Beauvoir's idea of

53 Beetham 1996, 128–129.
54 Tilly 1996, 5.

the body as 'a situation' - the combining of social, biological and geographical facts with the way an individual employs them – is helpful. For De Beauvoir the experience of the body, the way it was used and hence its *meaning* was fundamental to how a woman created or constrained her own freedom. It is hard to imagine an activity where such a hypothesis is more in evidence than mountaineering.[55]

3.1 Embodiment and Phenomenology.

Climbing is clearly an activity where the mind and the body, in interaction with the environment, are pushed to their limits.[56] For Victorian women mountaineers this was particularly significant; by climbing they were able to discover the power of their own body's capabilities, both psychologically and physically. The existentialist philosophy of Maurice Merleau-Ponty explains this important relationship of the body to its surroundings and how the two cannot be separated. The body, he suggests, is not simply a mechanical structure being acted upon by the 'world', but its subjectivity, existence, meaning and behaviour, is integral to, and shifts with the environment. Cultural geographer John Wylie, in exploring the different understandings and approaches to landscape, has persuasively employed Merleau-Ponty's approach to argue how 'practices' and activities such as climbing, farming, gardening and walking contribute to a 'simultaneous and on-going shaping of self, body and landscape.'[57] The interactions of the body with the external world establish ideas, beliefs, decisions and actions that constantly influence, alter and make or remake both the individual and the perception of the environment.[58] Merleau-Ponty claims the world and the body are only intelligible in light of each other. [59]

> When I reflect on the essence of subjectivity, I find it bound up with that of the body and that of the world, this is because my existence as subjectivity[i.e consciousness] is merely one with my existence as a body

[55] Moi 1999, 65.
[56] For wide ranging views on nature, mountains and the affect of the environment see MacFarlane 2003; Cosgrove and Della Dora 2009 in particular Debarbieux 2009.
[57] Wylie 2007, 166; Wylie 2009 considers the different perceptions of the body in the landscape by Scott and Amundsen's parties in their race to the South Pole.
[58] Matthews 2002, 70.
[59] Carman 2005, 68.

> and with the existence of the world, and because the subject that I am, when taken concretely, is inseparable from this body and this world.[60]

Merleau-Ponty used mountaineering specifically to show how the body's abilities, however great or small in any given environment, are fundamental to the creation of the wide variety of human experience and are crucial for people to know and understand the nature of freedom.

> 'It is clear', he wrote, 'that, one and the same project being given, one rock will appear as an obstacle, and another, being more negotiable, as a means.' [61]

Whether a rock is an obstruction, or an aid to climbing, depends on the particular body and the person's capability and perception within that environment. For some people both rocks would be barriers, for others neither would present a problem. The body, therefore, both defines and provides the solution to the obstruction and in doing so enables a sense of freedom. Merleau-Ponty recognised freedom has to be created; it is never absolute but always relative to external constraints. If there is nothing to be free from then freedom itself cannot be defined and so ceases to exist. The body's ability, mentally and physically, is crucial in reacting to the degree and nature of the various constraints to freedom any environment presents and therefore vital in determining an individual's liberty.[62] The relevance for women climbers is that the specific surroundings of the mountains helped them to understand and experience, to the fullest extent, their own body's capability in attempting to claim or witness such freedom.

Importantly, in overcoming or finding ways around barriers, either physical or psychological, not only is freedom realised but a different way of being often emerges.

> I experience my own body as the power of adopting certain forms of behaviour and a certain world, and I am given to myself merely as a certain hold upon the world. [63]

60 Merleau-Ponty 1976, 408.
61 Merleau-Ponty 1976, 439.
62 Matthews 2002, 21.
63 Merleau-Ponty 1976, 353–4.

This statement precisely encapsulates the situation for women mountaineers. The experience that their bodies had the ability to adopt 'certain forms of behaviour' in the 'world' of the mountains offered, for many, a new dimension of lived experience, a greater self-understanding and as Grace Hirst commented 'a sense of freedom.'[64]

The mountains, of course, also provided moments of revelation for men, but for women this phenomenon, in the nineteenth century, was surely more pronounced. This was, after all, a time when female bodies were pathologised, argued over, politicised and made central to debates over education, independence and representation. Mountaineering, for those who cared to look, exposed many of these concerns as illusory and allowed some women, probably for the first time, to see themselves from a new perspective.

The different nature of Alpine terrain demands different responses from the body. The changing type and gradient of the mountains, the different conditions of snow, ice and rock, the variable weather, the duration of an expedition and camping out all require corresponding reactions from the body. Similarly launching the body up a rock face or teetering over a crevasse moulding it, in other words, to the landscape's demands reveals, in the most visceral fashion, the actual nature of the environment as well as throwing into sharp relief the character of the person. Nineteenth-century descriptions of expeditions hinge on accounts of physicality and psychological resolve matched to, or in friction with, the terrain. This experience of the moment encapsulates De Beauvoir's notion of the body as 'a situation' rather than a 'thing'.

> A tiny point projected through the snow. I placed my foot carefully on it. But the next step was almost beyond my reach. My gloves were cast aside. I felt through the snow for something to hold, but only smooth surfaces met my grasp. At last I managed to arrive on the second step. My arm could then be thrust through the snow above. The third step was impossible. Michel...cut me one below in the hard snow. Into it I contrived to drop, a few cuts on my hands remaining as souvenirs of my passage.[65]

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[64] Mountains continue to provide women with self revelations. For accounts by leading female Himalayan mountaineers see Kaltenbrunner 2014; Pasaban 2011.
[65] Le Blond 1883, 86.

This account by Le Blond relives the delicate manoeuvring and cool head needed on a steep, icy, slope. It demonstrates, as Merleau-Ponty claimed, the inseparability of the body and its environment, of how in this case the terrain manipulates the body making it stretch, feel, grasp and then literally inscribes itself in the flesh. Leslie Stephen maintained

> Steepness is not expressed in degrees but by the memory of .... when a snow-slope seems to be rising up and smiting you in the face; when..... you are clinging like a fly to the slippery side of a mighty pinnacle in mid-air.[66]

The constraints for women that, in Merleau-Ponty's formulation, define freedom– their supposed physical limitation, society's restrictions and the landscape's topography – were being overcome. Many women were surprised at their newly found abilities. Havergal warned women against comparing what they could do at home with what they might achieve in the mountains. Sophia Holworthy was amazed that she could 'walk twice as much as in England.'[67]

The different embodied experiences of climbing provided stark contrast to normal life. This, however, was not always welcome. Such a sudden change that removed the fetters of someone's upbringing so that the normal framework and structure no longer existed could be disturbing as much as liberating. For some women it was almost as though a support had been taken away. The perceptive feminist Mary Taylor recognised this different life; she understood that the experience could be so shocking for some they could never revisit it.

> 'Above the pine trees the world is all right,' she wrote. 'If we do not return again after once being there, it is because we cannot sufficiently realise a state of mind, so different to that of our every-day life.'[68]

Without society's normal structure life could be scary. High in the mountains there was nothing to hide behind, literally or metaphorically.

It is telling that Taylor stressed the psychological rather than the physical difficulty of dealing with the challenges of the landscape. Climbing could be frightening, a fact acknowledged by Le Blond and Bell, who both wrote of being

66 Stephen 1904, 360.
67 Crane 1881, 125; Holworthy 1885, 42.
68 Five Ladies 2003, 103.

terrified on occasions.[69] Hornby and Spence-Watson also commented on the importance of maintaining a clear calm head.[70] Mountaineering often inflicted pain as well as pleasure. Joint strains, frostbite and exhaustion were not uncommon; neither were cold, uncomfortable flea infested nights high on the hill. Yet, possibly, these factors were paradoxically part of the appeal of this 'other world' that mountaineers embraced. The return to 'the primitive', the leaving aside the trappings of modern life and experiencing fear, danger, basic physical endeavour and discomfort seemingly had its appeal.[71] Jane Freshfield felt it 'aid[ed] us to put aside, for a time, the everyday cares and too engrossing interests of life.'[72]

Evidently for some people the basic lifestyle of climbing provided the antidote to the safe, comfortable, physically undemanding, lives of urban Britain. It reinvigorated them, made life feel more real, gave it definition, flavour, depth. It revealed a new dimension to the self and enriched their identity. A more primitive lifestyle brought Menie Dowie in 1890 'face-to-face with things that civilisation saves its women the need of looking at and consequently the need of thinking about. It teaches a repose and a calm philosophy.'[73] Sophia Holworthy agreed, pitying those who could not 'endure a few privations and roughings now and then.'[74]

This rougher, 'return to the primitive' experience gave a more intimate, sensual embodied relationship with the mountains. Women who wanted to get amongst the hills, as opposed to merely viewing them from a distance, were aligning themselves with Stephen in his disagreement with Ruskin. Put simply, the latter believed the hills were best perceived from afar, whilst Stephen felt the only way to truly understand mountains was by being in their midst. As Kevin Morrison

69 Bell, "Lyskamm and Monte Rosa, *Alpine Journal,* 41 (1929a): 278-281; Bell 1927, 51–54, 140–143; Le Blond 1883, 159.
70 Hornby 1907, 20; "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," July 3rd 1864.
71 The revitalising effect of returning to a more primitive lifestyle in the mountains is considered more fully in Bartlett 1993.
72 Freshfield 1861, 3.
73 Dowie 1891, 68.
74 Holworthy 1885, 50.

points out Stephen's view encapsulates Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology.[75] Whereas Ruskin's was a passive two-dimensional approach concerned with seeing, not doing, Stephen's was an active, three-dimensional engagement with the body being immersed and tested amongst the mountains. The hours of effort to get to a col, the close up feel of the rock, the view into the valley or over the clouds below a summit; these provided a more intimate sense of the mountain and an individual's place within it. They afforded a truly embodied experience that could question an individual's notion of who, or what, they were in that specific environment. Stephen summed this up:

> Where does Mont Blanc end and where do I begin? That is the question that no metaphysician has hitherto succeeded in answering. But at least the connection is close and intimate.[76]

Stephen was arguably the most expressive of mountain authors but others record similar experiences; only from close to could the mountains be truly understood. Havergal wrote,

> One day among the mountains is worth many of other beautiful scenery; I say *among* advisedly for a far off view is not the same thing it is the difference between *anticipation* and *possession*, future and present. However beautiful a distant view may be one wants to be nearer, to be *there*.[77]

That close-up embodied relationship which spoke of ownership gave female, as well as male, climbers a fresh perception of the mountains and of themselves. This sense was not only physical. The ability of the body to perform, to survive, to succeed in that landscape and to savour that success fostered a greater self-confidence. 'I gazed down the slope up which we had just come with enormous satisfaction,' pronounced Le Bond after successfully becoming the first party to climb the Col de Tacul in winter.[78] 'To overcome a difficulty is a gratifying performance', declared Plunket.[79]

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75 Morrison 2009.
76 Stephen 1904, 296.
77 Crane 1881, 70.
78 Le Blond 1883, 24.
79 Plunket 1875, 179.

Records show the mountains women attempted became progressively more challenging with each successful season. The intimate connection with the terrain shaped and changed the psyche as much, if not more, than the soma. Confidence could make the challenge of the unknown exciting rather than frightening, something Le Blond in particular found 'very enjoyable.'[80] The self-confidence resulting from success became part of some women's identity and a powerful source of motivation in its own right. The desire to tackle another summit, or a more difficult route, to savour again that feeling of having won through, could be overwhelming. Grace Hirst noted,

> There is something delightful in....possessing strength and power and endurance which enables one to encounter and surmount difficulties calling for considerable force.[81]

The psychological effects extended beyond a sense of self-assurance. As for Stephen, the embodiment and close proximity with the mountains caused some to ponder how 'the silence, the freedom, the solitude of the great mountain regions have such a soothing effect on the mind.'[82] Others 'felt somehow nearer heaven, further from earth, with all its small worries and vexations, its little meannesses, its sins and sorrows.'[83] The mountains could be demanding and challenging but they also enabled a sense of calm, tranquillity and other worldliness, which encouraged self-examination. Here, again, there was a lifting away from normal life and recognition of the different perspectives that presented themselves above the tree line.

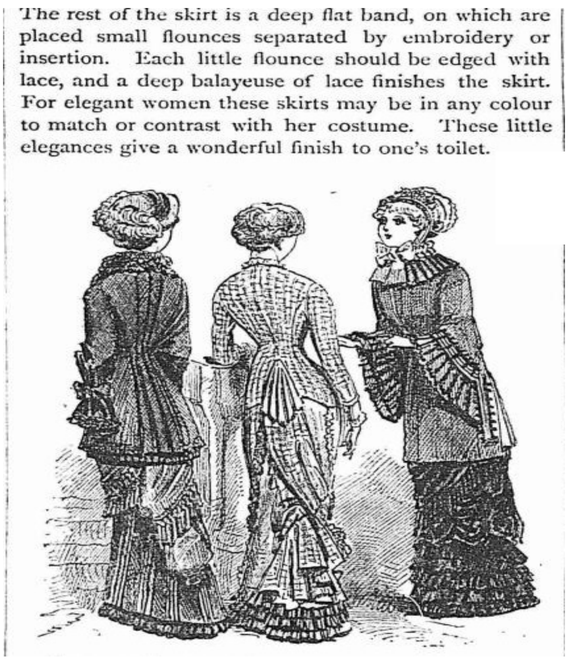
These changes and different perceptions were largely cognitive and emotional and therefore hidden from public view. What gave them public expression and made them constitutive of an external identity was the way women mountaineers represented themselves through their appearance and their writing; it is to these that I now turn.

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80 Le Blond 1883, 41.
81 Five Ladies 2003, 58.
82 Plunket 1875, 22–23.
83 Five Ladies 2003, 37.

3.2 Dress.

Climber's appearance needs to be assessed against what was commonplace for other women from similar backgrounds at this time. Dress was the archetypal emblem of femininity; it signified respectability, class and, according to Lady Campbell, a person's character.[84] Fashion, as seen in figure 44, was a major and popular part of most women's magazines from the 1860s. The re-launch of Isabella and Sam Beeton's *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, for example, included paper dress patterns, sometimes of the latest Paris fashions.[85] It is clear that the way women looked was extremely important. Clothes were a major talking point for many middle-class women; a crucial signifier of who they were and a major constituent of their identity. The writer Vernon Lee (1856-1935), for example, used clothes to make a statement about her life as a lesbian and feminist.[86]Mary Kingsley consciously dressed in rather austere, unflattering clothes, older than her years, to send a message about her seriousness and independence as an explorer.[87] Both women used dress as a form of communication.


The rest of the skirt is a deep flat band, on which are placed small flounces separated by embroidery or insertion. Each little flounce should be edged with lace, and a deep balayeuse of lace finishes the skirt. For elegant women these skirts may be in any colour to match or contrast with her costume. These little elegances give a wonderful finish to one's toilet.

[84] Campbell 1898, 76.
[85] Beetham 1996, 78.
[86] This is eloquently shown in John Singer Sargent's portrait of her in the National Portrait Gallery, London
[87] Birkett 1992, 17, 86.

Figure 44. Englishwomans' Domestic Magazine, June 1st 1881.

Whilst the primary function of clothes was clearly to provide covering, the sub text of female fashion was to make the underlying body more alluring. The popular use of corsets, as in Figure 45, to restrict waists to tiny circumferences, thereby accentuating the hips and breast, clearly fulfilled this purpose.[88] The university educated editor and advocate of 'healthy', more 'rational dress', Ada Ballin, realised how 'women in society' would 'endure tortures rather than appear unfashionable.'[89]



Figure 45. Advert for corsets accentuating the female form.[90]

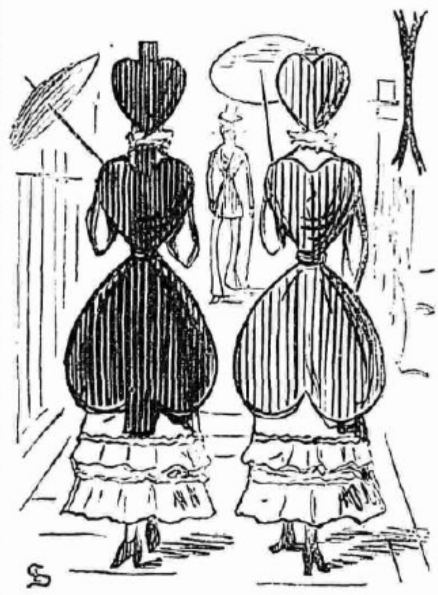
The Beeton's magazine became the centre of a controversy over the use of overly tight corsets – prompting an avalanche of correspondence and opinion. Women wrote both supporting and criticising 'tight lacing'.[91] Local and national newspapers joined in the heated discussion, which continued into the mid

[88] Beetham 1996, 79.
[89] Ballin 1885, v.
[90] "Izod Patent Corsets," *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine, May 1,* 1875.
[91] For a detailed account of opinions about the use and abuse of corsets see, Beetham 1996, 81–84."The Englishwoman's Conversazione," *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, November 1,1867 gives an excellent idea of the intensity of feeling.

1870s.[92] Most people were against the fashion, which they closely aligned to women's vanity and stupidity.[93] Punch published a number of satirical swipes (figure 46).[94]

Discussion of women's dress, consequently, developed a discourse separate from the fashion pages of periodicals. This development, in itself, highlights the importance society attached to appearance. Medicine joined in the fray stressing the danger to health, warning that tight lacing affected breathing, digestion, circulation and reproduction.[95] The physician Clement Dukes felt that girls, partly because of clothing, were becoming endemically weak, ill and hence both 'useless as companions' and 'unfit for their duties' as a mother.[96]

A WANTON WARNING TO VANITY.



INDEED the *Morning Post* ought to be ashamed of itself. That journal, which we used to call our fashionable contemporary, publishes a paragraph, headed "TIGHT-LACING," which reports the particulars of an inquest held at the College Arms, Crowndale Road, Camden Town, on the body of a young woman, aged only nineteen, and whereby, if they see it, our dear girls who take in such instructive journals as the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* will be terrified to no purpose by the information that—

"She was out three hours with a perambulator, in which was one child, and as she neared her destination she fell down insensible. She was taken to 10, Polygon, where upon examination by DR. SMELLIE, she was found quite dead. It was discovered that she was very tightly laced, and DR. SMELLIE stated that death was caused by effusion of blood on the brain, caused by fatty heart, accelerated by compression of the chest produced by tight-lacing. The jury returned a verdict in those terms."

92 A few typical examples of the media coverage are, "The Waist of the Period,"*The Times,* September 2, 1869; "Tight Lacing," *The Aberdeen Journal,* June 17, 1868; "Tight Lacing," *The Belfast News-Letter,* September 9, 1869.
93 "Tight-Lacing," *Penny Illustrated Paper,* July 3, 1869.
94 "A Plea for Tight Lacing," *Punch*, February 8,1868; "The Elasticity of Young Ladies," *Punch, September 18,* 1869a; A Victim, "The Torments of Tight-Lacing," *Punch*, October 23, 1869.
95 Morris 1883, 84–5, 442; Hewitt, "Effect of Tight Lacing in Producing Flexions of the Uterus," *BMJ*, 1 (1887): 112; *The Lancet* 1869.
96 Carter et al, "A Discussion on the Claims & Limitations of Physical Education in School," *BMJ*, 2. (1890); 1000.

Figure 46. Excerpt from Punch in 1869.[97]

Despite vehement protests for and against the production of fifteen-inch waists, very few people advocated no support at all. While extreme deformity was to be deplored, so also was the woman who 'let herself go.' Historian Jihang Park has shown that many women continued wearing corsets even when playing tennis, golf and later riding bicycles.[98] There was a definite resistance to abandon supportive 'stays'; although uncomfortable and restrictive, at times, men liked the result – something acknowledged even by doctors – and women enjoyed their attention.[99] Several men wrote of how they admired a trim figure; the waist after all, it was pointed out, was designed for a man to slip his arm around![100] Furthermore, the weakness that supposedly required support from corsets underlined the alleged fragility inherent to women's natural femininity and, by contrast, highlighted men's strength. The distinct body shape and its frailty, created and maintained by wearing 'stays', emphasised both women's difference and their dependence on men.

The control and manipulation of the body reflected, in some sense, the way society operated. Mary Douglas has convincingly proposed that limitations imposed on the body are an expression of social power. In highly structured societies, formality is valued and operates at a greater level than in those societies with looser arrangements. Formality involves restrictions on the person – on their behaviour, movements, associations and dress.[101] The constraints of women's clothing, and the display of the female body in the nineteenth century, clearly reflected the role society had assigned to middle-class women; to be decorative and appealing without being provocative, to bear children, to undertake undemanding physical activities and to devote their energies to moral, spiritual, family and largely domestic tasks. Beginning to use a

97 "A Wanton Warning to Vanity," *Punch,* October, 1869b.
98 Park 1989.
99 Cantlie 1883, 442.
100 "Women's Waists and Tight Lacing," *Dundee Courier & Argus and Northern Warder,* February 9, 1883; Admirer of a Pretty Figure, "Letter to the Editor," *The Times*, October 2, 1883.
101 Douglas 1996, 74–75.

corset, moreover, signified the passage into womanhood; a time to abandon younger, wilder spirits and make the person and the body conform.[102]

Dress, therefore, signified a woman's status. It marked youth or maturity; connoted class and indicated character, individuality and life choices. How then did climbers negotiate the apparent contradiction of maintaining their feminine identity whilst pursuing one of the most physically demanding activities possible at the time?

Women mountaineers accepted the need to adapt their clothing. Pragmatism overcame fashion and the demands of social mores. A compromise developed which reflected the different lifestyles experienced above and below the snow line. Walker, for example, in figure 20 is clearly wearing a crinoline which she apparently always wore but then removed once away from the village; it was for show not for mountaineering.[103] Not all women adopted such strategies; at a similar time Brevoort, seen in figure 23, is pictured wearing a straight dress albeit longer than she would have used 'on the hill'. The sketch in figure 47 by Elizabeth Tuckett on her 1866 Alpine tour shows a more typical outfit for a day in the mountains; gone is the hour-glass, corseted shape and the floor length skirt.

[102] Beetham 1996, 86.
[103] Schuster 1932, 32.



Figure 47. Common Climbing and Walking Dress 1866. Pencil Sketch by Elizabeth Tuckett.[104]

In 1892, Le Blond and Richardson wrote a section on women's clothing in C.T Dent's *Mountaineering*. It provided a definitive guide for aspirant women climbers. Full of practical advice on the design and choice of dresses, jackets, shirts, boots and gloves, it stressed the importance of being able to alter skirt lengths simply and quickly. They needed to be short when climbing but able to be let down easily when approaching the village. Generally this meant pinning the hem to a waist belt, 'a la washerwoman' as one woman, in 1877, described it.[105] As with explorers elsewhere, presenting a feminine appearance whilst in 'civilisation' remained important for most nineteenth-century women climbers.[106] Several women record ensuring their skirts were on, or at the correct length, before returning to the village.[107]

On the mountain, where the dictats of propriety did not apply, women frequently disposed of layers of clothing, including the longer skirt.[108] Removing this revealed the knee length underskirt that sat above knickerbockers and stockings.

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[104] Tuckett 1866, 23.
[105] Dent 1892, 50–52, with its specialisation on mountaineering surpassed Campbell Davidson 1889, a book aimed at a general audience with more modest goals.
[106] Bird 1879, 9–18, 86, 177.
[107] Hornby 1907, 121; Williams 1973, 64.
[108] Crane 1881, 119; Hornby 1907, 26.

Le Blond, in figure 32, gives some idea of the arrangement. This preparedness to wear only an underskirt gives some indication of how far some women would stray from normal feminine dress once away from habitation. It highlights again the different 'way of being' and contrasting dual life that existed in the mountains, and supports Douglas' view that, where social rules are relaxed, so are the constraints imposed on the body. Women's climbing outfits clearly bore little similarity to the fashions in magazines.

Nevertheless, most women felt a feminine appearance essential; it was important to have 'ladylike' clothes for towns or villages. Le Blond and Richardson suggested ways to achieve this with limited luggage space. The difference in outfits of women who remained in the villages and towns to those who climbed is shown by the dresses worn by Mrs Walker and Miss Hughes in figure 41. These were floor length and decorative, whereas mountaineer Mary Straton's dress in figure 39 is made of practical material, with an absence of frills and flounces, and stops above the ankle. Furthermore, this studio photograph, probably sent to family and friends, was designed to present the *best* appearance possible; it is likely her dress on the mountain was not so refined.

Feminine identity and appearance was more than just clothes; sunburn with its unsophisticated ruddy complexion was something women tried to avoid as much as possible.[109] There are many accounts of the embarrassment and pain suffered from blistered and peeling faces.[110] Tuckett's witty notes and drawings (figure 48) show the masks, with holes for eyes and mouth, worn by climbers. Both genders wore them but men were less assiduous in their use reflecting the greater importance women gave to appearance compared to their male colleagues.

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[109] Tindal, "Lady Mountaineer," Pearson's Magazine, 7 (1899): 358.
[110] Brevoort,"To her sister from Belalp," July 10, 1867a; Hornby 1907, 13; Five Ladies 2003.

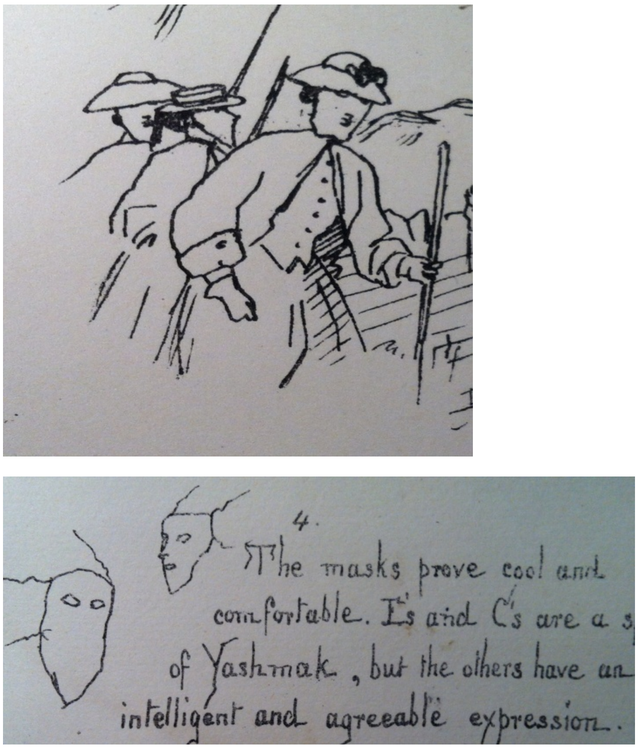


Figure 48. Top, women wearing cloth masks for sun protection as shown cut out below. Pencil Sketches by Elizabeth Tuckett, 1866.[111]

The less confining shorter skirts, looser fitting clothes and lack of stays were emblematic, as Douglas maintained, of a more liberal lifestyle. Less restrictive dress clearly allowed greater freedom of movement. This in turn made attempts on more challenging climbs possible and opened up a wider variety of terrain to explore. Success in this challenging environment was self-affirming; it emboldened women to do more and cemented their recognition as mountaineers.

In this context, skirts were not always the hindrance that modern minds might imagine. Historian of dress, Kate Strasdin, has shown that a full skirt permitted a wide range of movement when climbing. Moreover, women were comfortable and familiar with them in a way they were not with breeches.[112] Indeed, skirts could provide a sense of freedom in a variety of ways. Expedition accounts, unsurprisingly, never detailed toileting arrangements but on glaciers and snowfields where there was no cover - a difficulty alluded to by Mary Mummery

111 Tuckett 1866, 23.
112 Strasdin 2004.

- a skirt provided a ready-made tent.[113] In these circumstances, trousers committed the wearer to drafty, and potentially embarrassing, exposure. I suspect this is one reason climbers like Katherine Richardson were loathe to adopt them. As Lydia Becker, founder of the *Women's Suffrage Journal* commented, comfort had to be mental as well as physical. Women needed to feel at ease with what they were wearing.[114]

Similarly, the alpine communities contained networks of guides, hoteliers, *curés* and porters who were largely Catholic, patriarchal and deeply conservative. These groups were essential for the success of most climbing tours; prior to the late 1890s, it is unlikely they would have welcomed liberal female dress codes. Some mutual respect between visitors and locals was important; trouser wearing women may have undermined this.

Towards the end of the century, however, change occurred; breeches steadily became a more common sight on the hillside.[115] Spence-Watson's daughters, seen in figure 42, were university-educated scions of a suffrage campaigner and veteran mountaineer; unlike Richardson twenty years earlier, in 1898 they clearly felt comfortable in breeches. As the new century dawned, the steady growth of women wearing trousers when climbing or cycling reflected the greater freedoms and opportunities available to women generally in society. At this time, unlike earlier, wearing trousers was more acceptable; it clashed less with feminine identity than previously. Until this period, however, most women were happier adapting their skirts and dresses above the snowline or on the rock face knowing they could swiftly resurrect their 'normal' feminine appearance as they approached the village. For all these women climbers, however, their clothes on the mountain differed significantly to dress at home. The lack of constraints afforded by no corsets, shorter skirts or trousers reflected the greater informality and different identity experienced in their life on the hill.

3.3.Writing.

113 Mummery 1908, 94.
114 Quoted in Park 1989.
115 Hornby 1907, 317.

Writing was another obvious form of self-representation that like dress also had constraints and difficulties. Even though women wrote the majority of Victorian novels their work was commonly seen as 'popular' literature, inferior to 'serious' books largely written by men.[116] Prevailing perceptions of gender affected both the production and reception of women's writing. Autobiographical accounts written for a public audience, for example, were deemed acceptable for men, whom it was customary to associate with authoritative positions, but disapproved of for women.[117] To be taken seriously female travel writers were forced to navigate powerful cultural stereotypes; they had to appear to follow the prevailing view of femininity while often simultaneously recounting activities that directly challenged it. Clearly this had implications for the creation of identity.

Publishing accounts of intrepid exploration and discovery was perceived as male rather than female territory; a phenomenon aided by the colonial experiences of many middle-class men during much of the nineteenth century. From the early 1880s fictional works by authors such as Henty and Haggard exaggerated and strengthened the public image of exploration as brave, risky and quintessentially male; a picture which many writers had already created of mountaineering.[118] Travel and tales of heroic adventure became markers of hierarchical difference: they separated British middle-class men from 'weaker' native populations, women and the lower-classes, all of whom, for reasons of supposedly innate physical or mental incapacity, were felt incapable of such feats.[119]

Clearly travel was an activity unquestionably in the public realm, far removed from the security of the domestic world conventionally apportioned to women. Furthermore, mapping, measuring, quantifying and subduing were accepted, even expected, parts of male travel writing. They gave an authority to exploration narratives that were largely denied to women.[120] Moreover, the

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[116] Thompson 1999b.
[117] Bassnett 2002; Mills 1991, 41.
[118] Girdlestone 1870; Hudson and Kennedy 1856; Katz 2010; "Books by Henty ,G.A." 2015; Tosh 1999, 7; Tyndall 1871; Stephen 1904; Whymper 1871.
[119] Foster and Mills 2002, 252–4; Driver 2001, 23–67.
[120] Different expectations of gender are well demonstrated in Blake 1992; Kearns 1997.

heavily loaded term 'virgin territory' mostly goes unnoticed in common parlance, but is typical of the almost subliminal use of sexual metaphor found in several male narratives of exploration, as seen in the description of a climb by Whymper (discussed earlier in chapter two).[121] The use and apparent popularity of dominating language, either sexual or heroic in travel accounts, both fiction and non-fiction, was clearly problematic for women who chose to write of their own climbing and exploration.

Consequently books written by women about alpine climbing that entailed new routes, first ascents or exploration of novel areas were often criticised. Le Blond's inaugural publication, for example, was dismissed as 'slight and hasty' only suitable for 'ladies… to amuse an idle hour.'[122] Edward's account of her mountain travels was belittled for not venturing, it was felt, to truly 'unexplored' places.[123] Even a largely positive review of Plunket's book nevertheless felt the need to warn women not to undertake anything that might spoil 'their complexions or tear their clothes.'[124]

Freed from any expectation to record heroic deeds and adventures or to write reports and surveys, women had licence to comment on the more quotidian aspects of travel; to write candidly about the discomforts and difficulties as well as their aspirations and achievements. Because of this, in some sense, women were sometimes able to portray more of themselves in their writing than men, even as they often obscured information deemed 'unfeminine'. Sexual metaphor, unsurprisingly, is prominent by its absence.

Women wrestled with whether to keep their travel accounts private or contemplate publishing for a wider audience. Bourdieu maintains once hitherto private experiences become public - are written about and discussed by others - they change their state. No longer are such occurrences unconscious, unnoticed,

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121 Whymper 1981, 99–100. First published 1871

122 Coolidge, "Review of High Alps in Winter," *Alpine Journal*, 11 (1883): 306.

123 Freshfield, "Review of Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys," *Alpine Journal*, 6, (1872): 317-319.

124 "Here and There Among the Alps," *Saturday Review*, 39 (1875): 291-292.

nameless acts – part of someone's habitus – but, by attracting attention, they assume an authority and legitimacy.[125] This ability to objectify and publicise previously unformulated experiences confers power and expertise upon the writer: an attribute seen as male rather than female in the nineteenth century. As Sartre perceptively wrote, 'words wreak havoc when they find a name for what had up to then been lived namelessly.'[126] Given the social mores of the period and the perceived threat to male power women's mountaineering writing might have posed, Sartre's proposition may account for why women, like Lucy Walker, Anna Pigeon and Katherine Richardson chose to avoid any potential confrontation and kept silent; a strategy that enabled them to continue their sport undisturbed but kept any identity as a mountaineer concealed.

Women like Hornby, Havergal and Spence-Watson evaded problems associated with overt publishing by using a more acceptable feminine form of writing: the travel journal or letter.[127] These genres gave freedom to express opinions and describe even the most extreme activities with less risk of censor. However, they were not always as private as might initially appear; it was acknowledged that letters or journals frequently formed the basis of a book.[128] Queen Victoria's popular publication in 1868 of her Scottish travels underlined this possibility.[129] Freshfield's book Alpine *Byways* (1861) clearly began its life as a journal. Hornby and Havergal's posthumously published letters and diaries make it impossible to conclude they personally had publication in mind. Havergal, however, had already produced poetry books and well-known hymns, so may have realised her journals would interest a wider audience.

Publishing anonymously – as Freshfield did – was another popular method adopted by several women. Letters written to newspapers on many topics frequently merely bore the signature, 'A Lady'. Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), a prominent journalist, social commentator and supporter of women's rights,

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125 Bourdieu 1977, 170–1.
126 Quoted in Moi 1999, 279.
127 Crane 1881; Hornby 1907; "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," 1863.
128 Johnston 2013, 95; Mills 1991, 40–42.
129 Steinitz 2011, 143.

published anonymously at first. Moreover, her various articles consciously used a male voice to help avoid criticism and aid acceptance.[130] Mary Kingsley authored her books under the gender-neutral moniker M.H Kingsley to obscure her identity.[131] The authors of *Swiss Notes*, the journal of the 1874 Alpine tour led by Mary Taylor, remained unknown until as recently as the 1990s. It is interesting to consider why Taylor chose anonymity when she had already publicly authored forthright views about women's role and status in the *Victoria Magazine*.[132] It clearly was not to shield herself, but may have been an attempt to protect the younger women from accusations of improper or unfeminine behaviour or of being openly associated with herself, a renowned radical. In its genteel outward appearance and anonymity *Swiss Notes* concurred with the discourse of femininity, yet opened a window onto the different way of being available to women in the higher reaches of the Alps.

Remaining anonymous could enhance a woman's own inner self-perception and confidence, but the innate secrecy clearly had the intention of preventing the formation of any wider identity. Although such works publicised women's activities and opinions, by remaining nameless, they also tacitly supported women's concealment and consequently played a part in reinforcing the cultural constraints women laboured under. Even so anonymity made it easier to make that first step into publishing which spread awareness of women's more unusual activities to a wider audience.

Nevertheless, often by creatively adapting or filtering what, when and how they wrote, several women published attributed accounts of their Alpine tours and climbs.[133] They tried to follow a narrow line that appeared feminine but also related activities that often directly conflicted with prevailing views of middle-class womanhood. It was a tactic widely used by female travellers elsewhere.[134] They explicitly denied or obscured any 'unfeminine' activities but at the same time related how women could pursue more strenuous and exciting travel. One

[130] Easley 1999.
[131] Blunt 1992, 61.
[132] Taylor 1870.
[133] Fraser 2014, 63–64 has shown how these tactics were also adopted by female art historians.
[134] Blunt 1992; Bird 1879; Foster and Mills 2002, contain just some examples of this widespread tactic.

method was to adopt, or at least write about, behaviour or feelings commonly associated with the feminine – whether or not they accurately reflected the author's sensibilities. Another was to reassure readers they were not contemplating anything dangerous, risqué or 'manly', even if that was exactly what they were doing.[135]

Confessions of weakness, needing a chaperone, underplaying their climbing achievement, adopting a caring or sacrificial role were devices used by several women climbers.[136] Freshfield, for example, began her book reassuring readers she was not undertaking anything 'unfeminine,' but only a few pages later recounted crossing a crevasse where 'a slip...would be fatal'.[137] Havergal constantly reassured her sister she was safe; Jackson, Anna and Ellen Pigeon did not mention the severe frostbite they suffered; Hornby and Brevoort often referred to being slow and Spence-Watson frequently reminded readers of her children.[138]Making light of their achievements was a common tactic. Hornby, for example, claimed her success on the Dent Blanche when others had failed was merely because of favourable weather and unrelated to any personal talent she may have had.[139] Others, despite being out for more than twelve hours, claimed they were not in the least tired.[140] A perfunctory, dismissive, even joking, manner greeted any accidents or mishaps that occurred.[141]

In direct contrast to many men's accounts, most women consciously stressed an anti-heroic stance, purposely situating themselves at a distance from the perceived attitude of the all-male Alpine Club. Plunket, for example, begins her book with a hyperbolic description of the valiant, all conquering brave, British men whose 'daring deeds' through 'threatening crags' and 'perilous heights' had conquered most Alpine summits. By comparison, she asks, how can 'ladies',

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[135] Freshfield 1861, 2; Plunket 1875, 3.
[136] Freshfield 1861, 3; Holworthy 1885, 15; Plunket 1875, 170.
[137] Freshfield 1861, 30, 32.
[138] Brevoort, "Letter to her Sister after Jungfrau Attempt," July 14, 1867b; Jackson," A Winter Quartette," *Alpine Journal*, 14 (1889):200-210; Hornby 1907, 34,165; Pigeon 1885.
[139] Hornby 1907, 7.
[140] Crane 1881, 129, 138; Five Ladies 2003, 40; Holworthy 1885, 32.
[141] Coolidge, "A Day and a Night on the Bietschhorn," *Alpine Journal*, 6 (1872): 123–124; Five Ladies 2003, 37; Hornby 1907, 7–8; Jackson, " A Winter Quartette," *Alpine Journal*, 14, (1889): 209.

weak, dependent and unpractised as they are, expect to experience the mountains when they are clearly 'beset with such difficulties and dangers.' Surely, it is out of the question?

Having set up such a preposterous suggestion, she then steadily builds the riposte, which navigates between 'the forbidden ground of danger and the beaten paths of safety.' Plunket downplays the strength and stamina required and feels the dangers of mountaineering exaggerated, particularly in comparison to hunting, boating, bathing or travel by express train![142] After these disclaimers she details sixteen-hour days, 'hard scrambling', falling into a crevasse and frequent expeditions where she is mud–spattered and soaked to the skin.[143] Her writing belies her own activities; when she wrote her book she had never stayed overnight in a hut, feeling they must be 'the very reverse of agreeable'. Just a year later, in 1876, that had changed; she climbed Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa and the Strahlhorn despite previously writing that such 'giants' were out of reach for most women.[144]

Displaying physical skill, courage and risk-taking struck at the heart of what was thought 'manly'.[145] If women commonly paraded such qualities then such characteristics would lose their effectiveness as markers of 'manliness' and as importantly women might be vulnerable to accusations of being 'odd', bizarre or abnormal. Few women would welcome such attention or labelling.

An exception to this trend was Elizabeth Le Blond. Self-assured, independent and wealthy, she was unafraid to openly associate herself with the manliness of mountaineering[146] She wrote several books about her climbing and social life in Switzerland, most of which have a similarly confident style with few self-effacing remarks. [147] Coolidge's ascerbic review of her first book did not deter the publication of several more. Le Blond and Gertrude Bell are the only leading

[142] Plunket 1875, 1–3.
[143] Plunket 1875, 30, 37, 71–74.
[144] Brevoort, "Plunketts, Hornby at or near Zermatt," July 24, 1876.
[145] Tosh 1999, 111, 122.
[146] Le Blond 1903, ix.
[147] Le Blond 1928; Le Blond 1883; Le Blond 1903; Le Blond 1908.

women climbers who appear comfortable advertising themselves as pioneers in the mountains.

One can only conclude that, in the face of the prevailing discursive and social pressures, many women wanted to avoid attention. Their identity as women was important, as was that of being mountaineers but whereas the former was publicly displayed, the latter was more private and personal. By eschewing publicity, or adapting their writing to avoid criticism, women were reinforcing cultural norms even as their actions simultaneously undermined them. Such reticence to publicise of course has rendered it difficult to trace women climbers and their achievements. This was recognised even in 1884 when Coolidge commented,

> In endeavouring to keep pace with ladies ascents an author attempts the impossible since many ladies are too modest to record their exploits. Thus where three ladies named as having climbed the Finsteraarhorn, the number ought to our knowledge be at least doubled.[148]

4. Commonality, Connectedness

This final perspective on identity concerns those structures and beliefs that held women within close-knit groups; they offered them a sense of collective as well as individual distinctiveness. As will be seen, the strength of these connections varied across time and between different people.

4.1 The Climbing Community.

Despite exclusion from the AC and misgivings from some prominent male climbers, many men, as noted earlier, welcomed women as part of the community of mountaineers. Within that private milieu, it was more comfortable for women to allow their identity as Alpinists to shine through.

Coolidge's extensive archive of correspondence involving most of those who climbed from 1850 -1900 undermines the notion that women were routinely ostracised by men. Williams mentions a letter in this archive from Anna Pigeon

[148] Coolidge," Review, Uber Eis Und Schnee," *Alpine Journal*, 11 (1884): 306.

claiming some 'AC men' ignored them in the 'early days'.[149] She gives no reference number and, despite a through search, I was unable to locate this document in the file. However, I uncovered several other letters, which describe the sisters' attendance at AC reunions, visits to Coolidge and other climbing friends, that suggests any such tone of rejection was either short-lived or restricted to a discrete few.[150] Furthermore, the sisters' invitation by the AC to submit an account of, in the editor's words, their 'brilliant feat of mountaineering' in 1869 does not indicate a general desire to exclude them.[151]

Coolidge's collection of correspondence demonstrates how those elite women climbers, who avoided overt publicity, were acknowledged and welcomed by many of their climbing peers. Richardson, for example, liaised with fellow mountaineers Cecil Slingsby and Alfred Topham about new climbs she created near Arolla. She also consulted Coolidge about suitable guides for the Dauphine.[152] Martin Conway asked Le Blond to take photographs for an article he was writing for the *Alpine Journal* on a new route.[153] During the winter there were clearly many occasions when fellow climbers met up. Margaret Jackson held dinners in London for those who travelled from the north to attend AC meetings.[154] There is a sense of deep friendship and bonds born out of their united interest in climbing and the mountains. In the privacy of their correspondence and meetings, women comfortably shared a common identity with men as mountaineers. Here, as on the hill, their gender was less of an obstruction. This reduction in the importance associated with a person's sex is worth emphasising because it complicates the picture, often painted in the historiography of Victorian gender relations, where being male or female characteristically delimits interests and contacts.

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149 Williams 1973, 49.
150 Pigeon, "Letter to William Coolidge," June 3 1892; Pigeon, "Letter to William Coolidge," September 9, 1896; Abbott (nee Pigeon), "Letter to William Coolidge," December 19, 1897.
151 "Note by the Editor," *Alpine Journal*, 5 (1870):96.
152 Richardson, " Letter to William Coolidge re Dauphine Guides," June 8, 1888; Richardson, "Climbing the Dru, Sharing info with Mr Slingsby," October 5, 1889.
153 Conway, "Requesting Burnaby's Help," September 8, 1886a.
154 Schuster 1932, 62.

A common group bond and connectedness, integral to a particular aspect of a person's identity, existed not only in the refined atmosphere of correspondence or shared dinners, but was lived out on the mountainside, in the roughness and vicissitudes of alpinism. Adolphus Moore and Frederick Gardiner, for example, were frequent members of Walker's climbing party. Richardson's climb of both peaks of the Dru was only possible because of collaboration with another, all-male, group. Mumm's *Alpine Register* and many *führerbücher* contain innumerable references to climbing parties composed of both men and women.[155]

These collaborations however were rarely for the public gaze. An exception was the inclusion of Lucy Walker in Whymper's 1871 engraving, The Club-room of Zermatt (figure 19) for his book *Scrambles in the Alps* (1871), but even here, as noted earlier, her name was omitted from the subsequent legend. In later years, Walker developed something of a matriarchal identity within the climbing community; she frequently encouraged, helped and advised others.[156] There was a tacit acknowledgment by the group of her expertise, influence and knowledge.[157] Lord Schuster's dedication to her of his book, *Peaks and Pleasant Pastures* (1911), is gushing testament to such encouragement. Ironically, despite not writing anything herself, she 'laid commands' on Schuster to 'collect and publish' his 'scattered papers' which he had consulted her about.[158]

The sense of a common identity and bond within the climbing community irrespective of gender, however, must not be overstated; it was not universal. At the level of the individual great friendships clearly evolved but on the wider, public stage segregation occurred. The barring of women from membership of the AC is the most obvious example. Although the club's journal covered ascents made by women on previously unclimbed mountains, it never marked the first time a woman climbed a peak. There is no mention even of Walker's first ascent of the Matterhorn. The journal records that her father climbed the mountain just

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155 Mumm 1923.
156 Hornby 1907, 21.
157 Whymper,"Two Lady Climbers," *Girls Own Paper,* December 15, 1885, 166.
158 Schuster 1911, 5–7.

months before he died, but omits the explanation he was accompanying his daughter on the first female ascent. Although *Punch* celebrated her achievement, from the *Alpine Journal* there was only silence.

It is important to underline the fact that although the AC was undoubtedly extremely influential it was not the sole proprietor of mountaineering identity. Not every man who enjoyed the hills wanted to join the club; and of course, neither guides nor women were invited. The Club Alpin Francais, established in 1874, possibly reflecting France's republican stance, was more liberal and inclusive. It welcomed women members from the outset. Many British climbers, male and female, joined. Katherine Richardson, Margaret and Edward Jackson, Alfred Wills, Elizabeth Le blond, Frederick Gardiner, Charles Pilkington, Norman and Mabel Neruda are just a few examples.[159] Paillon hinted, in her eulogy, that Richardson found life in France, where she eventually lived for over thirty years, a freer, more open and stimulating place; the admission of women to its alpine club may have typified those qualities she admired.[160]

Amongst the women who climbed regularly, one can often detect a definite sense of kinship and connectedness. There are several descriptions of how they helped and advised each other. Jackson, for example, the first woman to use an ice axe in preference to the more unwieldy alpenstock gave one to the Pigeon sisters 'and urged us to begin using them,' noted Anna.[161]Jackson, Hornby, Walker, Brevoort, Straton and the Pigeon sisters wrote or met frequently during the winter months and Richardson, Paillon and Le Blond were clearly close friends.[162]

Such friendships undoubtedly added to the motivation of climbing, but competition to be the first woman to the summit was also a notable feature. The most well known rivalry was between Walker and Brevoort in the ascent of the Matterhorn. Coolidge maintained that Walker's guide, Anderegg, heard rumours

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159 Mumm 1923.
160 Paillon, "Miss K. Richardson," *La Montagne*, 23 (1927): 326-323.
161 Abbott (nee Pigeon) "Letter to William Coolidge," December 18 1900.
162 Pigeon, "Letter to William Coolidge," June 3,1892; Abbott (nee Pigeon), "Letter to William Coolidge," December 18, 1900; Paillon, "Les Femmes Alpinistes," *Annuaire de Club Alpin Francais*, 26, (1899): 273-296; Le Blond 1928; Hornby 1907.

that Brevoort was intending to make an attempt and ensured Walker pre-empted her. Brevoort, as recompense, became the first woman to traverse the peak from Zermatt to Breuil a month later. Richardson famously raced from Chamonix to climb the Meije because she heard a woman was planning a first ascent, only to discover the rumour referred to herself. Hornby was clearly proud of being the first woman to traverse the Gran Paradiso and climb Mont Pourri. Of those women who wrote about their climbing, there was an obvious delight and sense of achievement in being the first woman onto a summit. Gertrude Bell summed up a fortnight's climbing in a letter home,

> Two old peaks. Seven new peaks – one of them first class and four others very good. One new saddle, also first-class. The traverse of the Engelhorn, also new and first- class. That's not bad going is it![163]

The competitive spirit, contrary to contemporary belief, belonged to women as well as men. It is also true, however, that men were often involved and encouraged women to attempt first ascents. As already mentioned Anderegg facilitated Walker's ascent, Coolidge was immensely proud of his aunt's achievements and defended her reputation, expertise and courage, in his irascible style, all his life. Robert Spence-Watson similarly enjoyed his wife's first ascent of the Balfrin and Ortler.[164] These instances merely serve to underline the way some women and men bonded together in their shared love of climbing.

The acceptance and integration of women into the mountaineering community, as with most social constructions, however, was complex. On a private level there was plenty of integration of the sexes, with women on the whole welcomed as climbers and companions. As Hansen has remarked, several lifelong partnerships began in the hotels, and on the slopes, of the Alps. *The Alpine Register* discloses how many mountaineering families became related to each other after one or two generations. The portrayal to the public of climbing and climbers as a group, however, remained predominantly male; women may have been part of the community but to those outside the sport they were difficult to discern.

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[163] Bell 1927, 129.
[164] Spence Watson 1969, 23–24.

4.2 Nationalism.

Both sexes, however, openly displayed their strong and superior sense of nationality. Whilst this may have been true of all British visitors to Europe, the strenuous and goal oriented nature of mountaineering often meant there was an even keener feeling they 'had the credit of England to uphold.'[165] It was an important component of identity both in an internal private sense and in the way they presented themselves to the world. Hansen's claim of imperialist motives for many male mountaineers implies aggressive control and dominance. Although there is little evidence of this, at least amongst women, declarations of patriotic pride abound. Grace Hirst, for example, described the appearance of her party when they returned wet and bedraggled from the hill as not commanding 'the respect amongst the natives which they, as British women felt ... every right to demand.'[166]

Although friendly with local people climbers, of either gender, united in feelings of superiority due solely to nationality. They had a shared sense that the British occupied the moral and religious high ground. Spence-Watson attending a Sunday service in Zermatt claimed, 'there was something very impressive in the way all the English [were] united together in that foreign land by one common bond.'[167] Although climbers despised the 'tourist class' (as discussed in chapter 1) they were British, and this alone warranted a degree of support. Attending church service, often conducted by a British clergyman, was symbolic of that patriotic tie.

Many climbers, male or female, expressed the belief that they possessed greater courage and determination by virtue of their nationality. Moore's comment of his and Walker's determined ascent of the Eiger is typical.

> A repugnance to abandoning an undertaking once commenced appears to be naturally inherent in the breasts of Britons, male and female alike.[168]

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165 Hornby 1907, 169.
166 Five Ladies 2003, 58.
167 "Journal of Elizabeth Spence-Watson," June 28th 1864.
168 Moore 1939, 2:348.

These beliefs and attitudes were part of the English middle-class habitus. This group was brought up to organise, educate, judge, and be the arbiters of good taste aesthetically and morally. In addition, they had experienced the material rewards of the world's largest empire and observed its apparent invincibility. All these factors contributed to a shared sense of British superiority and patriotism evident in most mountaineers.

5. Summary

If there is a common thread that runs through this analysis of women climber's identity it is the recognition of dichotomies. How, for example, women conducted themselves in a different manner above and below the snowline; how they led contrasting lives in Britain as opposed to Switzerland; how what they wrote often belied their actual accomplishments; how their self-projection as a mountaineer oscillated with descriptions of themselves as a 'lady'. These different manifestations represent the way women navigated a path amongst the discourses surrounding gender and travel and how women, as independent, autonomous actors, had to fight against marginalisation. The male world of travel and exploration often viewed female contributions with disbelief or scepticism –women explorers were frequently depicted as exceptional mavericks or eccentrics – something that continues to some extent to the present day.[169] The double aspect of the female mountaineer's self-presentation constituted a compromise. It was a way of remaining connected with society's mores whilst simultaneously carving a space that often directly opposed Victorian values. This is the strength of Brubaker and Cooper's analytical model- it provides an examination of how identities are forged under the differing pressures of society, location and time. It exposes the plural nature of identity, bringing out its dynamic and fluid nature, in a given context.

These different manifestations of women climber's identities were intimately related to the factors that motivated them; the joy of physical exertion, of competition, of realising and using the body's capability, of being part of a close, climbing community. Most important was the sense of belonging and oneness

[169] Mills 1991, 31.

with the mountain environment, the tranquillity, the return to the primitive and the other worldliness afforded by the high mountains, and the often-unprecedented insight this terrain offered to the individual's physical and mental abilities. All of these contributed to the 'sense of freedom' that Grace Hirst expressed in 1874.

Conclusion

This thesis has considered how female mountaineering related to the prevailing social and cultural mores that affected femininity and middle-class women's perceived place in the second half of the nineteenth century. It examined the perception and use of the female body, asked what were the achievements and material conditions of women's climbing and explored the consequences of their participation on the notion of mountaineering and the presumption that the Alps was a space for male adventure and enjoyment. Finally, it has addressed the occlusion of this story itself, asking why Victorian women climbers remained largely unacknowledged for so long. This chapter summarises the findings of my research and assesses its contribution to historical knowledge and suggests its purchase on present day debates.

Female climbers came largely from middle-class backgrounds; they enjoyed a social status that tended to provide them with a certain confidence and independence born of their habitus. However, I have argued, their participation in the arduous walking and climbing, inherent to mountaineering, not only reflected but also consolidated and enhanced that sense of confidence and self-belief still further. The case studies in chapter three amply make this point. Although clearly affected by a culture that firmly placed men in positions of authoritative power, women who climbed often subverted or manipulated these cultural preconceptions and social restrictions; sometimes, as in Elizabeth Le Blond's case, in a strikingly cavalier fashion. Whilst a privileged social background enabled these women to travel to the Alps, my research has shown it was the actual process and experience of climbing that gave them an enhanced sense of autonomy, power and freedom. Mountaineering itself, and not just the decision to visit the Alps, stimulated some women to think differently about their capabilities and their lives, in many cases cementing a choice to return regularly, often developing a lifelong association with the mountains and fellow mountaineers.

Many women spoke of experiencing a different 'way of being' in the mountains where, as I have shown, the demands of the environment took precedence over conventional social etiquette. Women not only crossed a conventional social taboo in often finding themselves the only female in a climbing party, but also altered their dress, slept out in the open and on occasions had entirely unknown men for company, even through the night. Many of the usual associations of bourgeois femininity were thus temporarily abandoned before being re-appropriated on return to 'civilisation'. For several women, this rough, strenuous, basic lifestyle provided a glimpse of another way of life and a new vista of possibilities.

This brings me to the wider significance and implications of this study. Women mountaineers' demonstrated, or gave accounts, of self-realisation, confidence, and autonomy when climbing. This has repercussions, I suggest, for how we think about the spaces available to women, the significance and effectiveness of medical advice or opinion and the varying ways women might challenge the conventions of gender and gender relations in the Victorian period.

The Body and Gender.

Throughout the thesis I have linked women's activities like these with the perception of the female body. To reiterate De Beauvoir's statement – the body was 'a situation, a grasp on the world and a sketch of their projects.'[1] Few conditions exemplify this more than mountaineering; here the matching of the body's physical and emotional abilities to the terrain was essential. The rapport women's bodies developed with the mountain environment gave them a sense of freedom, the opportunity to live a double life, to behave differently above the snow line to that below. At a time when women's bodies were central to debates within medicine, education, work and politics – discussions that often embraced varying degrees of control or subjugation – the female body moving unconstrained, tackling some of the highest mountains in Europe, was a potent demonstration of women's own agency, loosened from the confines imposed by society.

[1] De Beauvoir 2011, 46.

Although, as detailed earlier, much has been written about nineteenth-century scientific and medical views of female bodies less attention has been given to women's *own* perceptions or use of their bodies.[2] While various studies of the working class have been more alert to the importance of women's physicality and bodily awareness, studies of the middle and upper classes have mostly neglected the subject.[3] The findings from this thesis, however, suggests that investigating how middle-class women used or perceived their bodies may enrich our knowledge of a diverse range of their other experiences.

Mary Douglas has shown how increased bodily freedom commonly links with social freedoms.[4] Climbers such as Mary Taylor, Millicent Fawcett and Elizabeth Spence-Watson, who all campaigned for greater social equality, support this connection. The American women's rights activist Elizabeth Cady Stanton was also forthright in claiming a link between physical activity and greater female autonomy.[5] Involvement in protest, philanthropy, leisure activities, employment and even managing a household all demanded an interplay between the body and its environment to varying degrees. The interesting question is what role, if any, did physical activity or the lack of it, and the perception of bodily freedom, play in provoking or restraining women's political or social activism, of enabling or curtailing women to confidently move in both the public and the domestic arena? This study suggests that attending to such questions about bodily movement, physical performance and expression would enhance our understanding of the experience of *being* a woman in the nineteenth century.

Women's liberty, of course, has been restricted to varying degrees, according to time, place and cultural climate. The question of how women use their bodies to manage or subvert whatever restrictions, norms and conventions apply to them

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[2] Piepmeier 2004 is an exception. She considers how five diverse American women, between 1830 and 1890, confronted & utilized their embodiment.
[3] Hall 2013 describes women's experiences in mining, fishing and agriculture in Northumberland, where despite 'muscular' work they were not thought 'mannish' but had a profound sense of self-worth. See also Morgan 2002; Verdon 2002.
[4] Douglas 1996.
[5] Parks 1987, 66.

as women is, therefore, a matter of wide historical import. Clearly in situations of restricted social and political freedoms this question has all the greater significance. Butler and Bordo maintain that only by continual repetition of certain actions, movements or postures that are perceived as subversive, can any impact on the dominant construction of the gendered body be effected.[6] During the last forty years of the nineteenth century, I suggest, the repeated activities of women mountaineers, although initially few in number, began to undermine established notions of what was suitable for one sex or another. Butler's concentration on the importance of discourse over materiality, as discussed in the introduction, means this thesis aligns more fully with Bordo; it was the *practical demonstration* of women being repeatedly visible to others on the mountain – to men and women relaxing on holiday in the Alps as well as to active climbers – that carried greater influence than texts or discussion.

By constantly demonstrating that middle-class women's bodies were capable of strenuous physical activity it might be argued that the very idea of the female body as 'an issue' was gradually undermined. The activities of women alpinists helped challenge the idea of woman as 'other'; for here, the female frame was clearly visible climbing mountains, performing exactly the same manoeuvres as men. Nevertheless, the thesis raises a question as to how much 'subversive repetition' is required before dominant presumptions about gendered roles are truly changed. Although women climbers were more evident in the nineteenth century than previous studies recognised, it took at least another thirty years before female climbers were sufficiently numerous to be unremarkable. The founding of the LAC in 1907 provided a focus for women mountaineers and prompted another surge in interest. This suggests that although repetitive acts, like those detailed in this thesis, may play an important role in effecting changed perceptions of gender, the nature of surrounding social and political structures are even more crucial.

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[6] Bordo 2003, 245-276; Butler 2006.

Medicine, Exercise and Women

As discussed in the introduction and chapter three medicine and science were prominent discourses in the nineteenth century but this study suggests their influence may not always have been as great as has been widely thought.[7] The Alps clearly provided opportunities for women to pit themselves against nature, and to experience extremely hard physical activity, normally regarded as unfeminine. As I have outlined, however, medical opinion at the time commonly advised only moderate exercise for women. Going beyond 'actual fatigue point' was to be avoided and 'violent exercise' thought 'distasteful'.[8] Exercise was to be sufficient to keep women fit to be mothers but not excessive enough that they became athletes.[9] Vertinsky, who studied medical opinion and institutional records in both Britain and America, maintains that most doctors led women in the nineteenth century to refrain from strenuous exercise.[10] The evidence, described in this study, of women's meticulously kept itineraries, however, reveals that many ignored such advice and did not rest during menstruation as advised by so many doctors. This implies that some re-evaluation is needed of the influence of medical or scientific opinion on the lay public and its ability to actually alter people's behaviour. Women's mountaineering shows the gap that existed, in other words, between a prevailing ideology and lived experience. Some scholars have highlighted this disjunction, but few have done so in the context of women's display of robust physicality[11]. A number of sport historians such as Hargreaves, McCrone, Parks, Mangan and Huggins suggest women largely followed the advice found in medical texts and reports.

Doctors and medical commentators, who upheld opinions about women's frailty and dangers of over-exertion, often allied themselves with arguments proposed by exponents of evolution and comparative anatomy, not to mention the many other voices in Victorian Britain who championed the prevailing social mores. As

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[7] Gorham 1982,72-73, 87-89; Hargreaves 1994,47-8; McCrone 1987, 104; Vertinsky 1990.

[8] Bennett, "Hygiene in the Higher Education of Women," *Popular Science Monthly*, 16 (1880): 519-530; Weatherly 1882,17.

[9] "Gymnastics by Ladies," *Morning Post,* December 24, 1867; "Exercise for Girls," *BMJ,* 1, (1884):574.

[10] Vertinsky 1990, 15-16.

[11] Gay 1984a, 4:313-315; Mason 1994, 195-6; Robbins 2008, 90.

some women became more autonomous and began to challenge these standards, particularly the prevailing gender inequality, perhaps it is not surprising they were sometimes inattentive to advice from doctors and their institutions that appeared to support the status quo. However, as discussed in chapter three, the status of medicine in the second half of the nineteenth century was still evolving; there were struggles between competing specialties that meant a single authoritative voice may have been indistinct. Nevertheless, however the debates, conflicts and shifting social role of medicine in Victorian Britain were understood this thesis demonstrates that medical advice often lacked practical authority or effectiveness in some quarters.

Studies of sport and exercise have also largely concentrated on institutional reports, in this case from schools, colleges, clubs and governing bodies.[12] As with medicine's prescriptions for women about exercise, such a methodological approach often elides the individual that the practitioner or teacher is trying to affect, while simultaneously giving a high priority to proffered advice rather than actual lived experience. This historical approach tends to downplay or exclude activities that operate beyond the view of sporting or educational bodies and associations – such as the events described in this thesis. In uncovering many women's experiences of mountaineering and walking this work, therefore, broadens our understanding of women's early engagement with sport and physicality. Previously it was suggested female climbing only began regularly in the 1890s when, as I have shown, it actually started thirty years earlier.[13] Furthermore, this study implies a significant number of middle-class women were prepared, even keen, to embrace strenuous activity and sport many years before exercise and games were part of the curriculum at girl's schools.[14]

A Complex Vision of Middle-class Womanhood

Mountaineers were one group, amongst several clusters of women, who clearly undermined the notion of gendered separate spheres. A number of historians have shown how many Victorian women defied the kinds of social expectation I

[12] Hargreaves 1994, 88-111; Huggins 2004; Mangan 2006; McCrone 1987; Osborne 2004.
[13] Parratt 1989.
[14] See McCrone 1988 for an excellent study of the development of sport in girl's schools from 1870.

have detailed in this thesis and proved anything but passive in the face of a patriarchal society.[15] Some have suggested the growing political and social activism by, and on behalf of, women from the 1850s may indeed have stimulated an overreaction in defence of the prevailing ideology of separate spheres.[16] Unlike most other female 'activists', however, women climbers were not pursuing any direct moral, political or religious purpose; they had no evident philanthropic goal. Whereas those who campaigned politically or socially were often stimulated and energised by some moral imperative to transgress social 'rules,' mountaineers had no such obvious force behind them.

Women climbers and their achievements, however, did not occur in isolation; they reflected, to some extent, the growing enthusiasm and pressure for female equality and recognition. In one sense it could be claimed climbers unconsciously fed off the moral or political endeavours of others – those people who pushed for women's greater autonomy, better education and political emancipation in the second half of the nineteenth century. Early mountaineers like Lucy Walker and Emma Forman, for example, began climbing in the late 1850s just as the *Englishwoman's Journal* was launched, the Langham Place Group formed and Eliot published *Adam Bede* to great acclaim. Whilst these events were not coordinated, it would be fanciful to imagine they were unrelated. Over the following thirty years women's increasingly common presence in the high Alps overlapped with the well-known campaigns against the CD acts and lobbying for improved female education, political representation and property rights. Women mountaineers climbed for themselves but arguably their activity was a manifestation of a wider push for greater female autonomy – to claim for themselves some of the experiences and rights that many men had previously enjoyed exclusively for several years.

Clearly, this study has revealed a group of women whose activities and behaviour undermine the stereotype of a dutiful, stay-at-home, delicate, exercise-avoiding woman. In this regard the thesis adds to the work of other

[15] Delap 2011; Easley 1999; Finn 1996; Gleadle and Richardson 2000; Schwartz 2013.
[16] Gleadle 2001, 20.

historians in constructing a more pluralistic, complex, vision of middle-class women.[17] These women were not a homogenous group; as Schwartz has shown they might agree with each other on one subject and disagree on others. Frances Havergal to some extent embodied the contradictions that existed within the female middle-class. A religious ‘lady’ who apparently conformed to the stereotypical view of such women yet, when the opportunity arose, delighted in romping ‘like a boy,’ walked in her petticoat and enjoyed the accompanying sense of freedom. Although some women may have been content to be restrained in their dress, behaviour and leisure, many were not. Female mountaineers demonstrate the extent to which some women employed real agency in determining their life choices.

Male Space and Gender Relations.

It is important to note, however, that Havergal’s normative assumption remained for the boy – not girl – to be the emblem of rumbustious wild play. To some extent, this connects to the notion that free movement, open spaces, travel and particularly the mountains were imagined as male places and activities.[18] Several historians have noted how exploration in the nineteenth century – going where none had been before – was coded as male and that women purportedly had little interest in ‘claiming and naming’ new territory.[19] Nevertheless, even as those beliefs held sway substantial numbers of women were extensively exploring the Alps. Moreover, several leading female climbers were very keen to be the first to climb a mountain or establish a new route and, importantly, be known for doing so; several peaks are named after Victorian women climbers. This, together with the frequency that women’s names, or sometimes just the acknowledgement of ‘a lady’, occur in hut records or *führerbücher* erodes any assumption that climbing or the mountains were an exclusively male preserve, just as it weakens any notion that women were innately uncompetitive.

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[17] Finn 1996; Fraser 2014; Green and Owens 2003; Gleadle 2013; Gleadle 2001; Morgan 2007.
[18] Hansen 1991; Conway, "How to Climb the Alps," *Daily Chronicle,* December 30, 1893; Ring 2000.
[19] Domosh and Seager 2001, 144; Foster and Mills 2002, 176, 259.

This study takes a very specific social group and physical activity in a particular environment in order to make a contribution to the wider view of gender and gender relations in the second half of the nineteenth century. It reveals that for many people a complex but also collaborative relationship existed between the two sexes. For example, although the AC excluded women many members nevertheless had close and supportive relationships with leading female climbers; they exchanged information, were members of the same climbing parties; they socialised in Zermatt, Grindelwald or Chamonix and often maintained contact throughout the year.[20] The popularity of the Alps as a holiday destination, with the steady development of mountaineering as a middle-class pastime, created a climbing community that gathered together throughout the year. Marriage strengthened these bonds; many people, including Leslie Stephen, met their spouse in the Alps and intermarriage between AC members' families was commonplace.[21]

Mountaineering might be thought an impregnable male bastion, the last place where women would be accepted and able to enjoy similar experiences to men. Yet the presence of women within the mountaineering community implies actual rather than declared gender demarcations could be less marked than outward convention might imply. Lived experience was often different to that espoused by the prevailing ideology. Despite assumptions by several historians about the all-male nature of mountaineering and claims that men disliked or discouraged women climbers, my research has found a more inclusive atmosphere than hitherto proposed.[22] These findings align with the view of historians such as Gleadle, Colley and Robbins that the ideology of separate spheres could be more rhetoric than reality.[23] This is not to say that men or women did not enjoy collecting into single-sex groups on occasions, but in the case of climbing a

[20] Conway, "Supper with the Walkers," November 22, 1885; Conway, "Requesting Burnaby's Help," September 8, 1886a; Moore 1939; Richardson, "Climbing the Dru. Sharing Info with Mr Slingsby," October 5, 1889.
[21] Examples are Francis Fox m Marianna Tuckett, Norman Neruda m Mabel Peyton (all these families were AC members) & Douglas Freshfield m Stephen's wife's cousin 'Gussie Ritchie.'
[22] Clark 1953, 175; Hansen 1991, 2, 45, 145–154; O'Gorman 2000; Ring 2000; Schut 2013.
[23] Colley 2010; Gleadle 2001; Robbins 2008.

shared fascination with the mountains commonly drew people together rather than pushed them apart.

A crucial conclusion to be drawn from this thesis is the importance of examining a subject from the perspective of both sexes rather than merely one. This may seem so obvious as to not require stating yet mountaineering remains an area where men's voices or experiences have dominated both the primary and secondary literature. In other archetypically male domains, such as science and politics, historians have begun to redress the imbalance.[24] Examining such topics from a female as well as male viewpoint has enriched historical knowledge and understanding of society as a whole, not merely the subject in question. The interaction between the sexes often alters the meaning and perception of a particular topic. This study of mountaineering, for example, has shown not only the hitherto neglected presence of women but also how they frequently changed the way men reacted to and viewed their climbing. After his marriage Stephen adjusted his mountaineering to undertake less risky expeditions while Wills actively encouraged wives and daughters to accompany him onto the summits. The presence of women in a climbing party often resulted in better food, shelters and greater use of mules for the first part of the journey. The accounts of women climbers, as noted previously, lead us into remote mountain huts where unexpectedly they sometimes shared nights unchaperoned often with relative strangers. They describe such things as frostbite, falls, being scared, lost luggage, difficulty with guides, and impromptu bivouacs. Their accounts complicate both orthodox readings of Victorian mountaineering as irredeemably male or heroic, and of middle- class women's experience as stereotypically safe, unadventurous, and uncompetitive. It suggests we should be cautious in labelling any activity, behaviour or space as belonging to one sex alone.

The influence of environment.

Although women travelled to countries throughout the Empire, the experience they encountered in the Alps was, in some ways, unique. Not only were these

[24] A representative sample of work on these large topics are on science Fox-Keller 1985; Haraway 1988; Merchant 1982; Oreskes 1996; Richards 1997; Rossiter 1982; Shteir 1997; and on politics Hall et al 2000; Hannam 2009; McCarthy 2014; Rendall 2004; Richardson 2013.

mountains more accessible than the Rockies, Himalaya or Caucasus, but also there was less administrative infrastructure or social impediments to negotiate. Unlike the Himalaya, the Alps were on a scale that allowed climbing in small groups rather than in a large team. For the same reason the Pyrenees attracted some women, but transport there was more difficult and lengthy, such that they never became as popular. Few places other than the Alps offered women comparatively easy access to a geography that could be simultaneously testing and liberating. The Alps were far enough away to offer adventure and the chance to experience different cultures and languages, but close enough to be familiar. As detailed in chapter one, accounts from eighteenth-century Grand Tours, Romantic poetry and art plus the various battles and disputes surrounding the French revolution and its aftermath all served to make the Alps recognisable, just as they also publicised their largely unexplored, remote terrain.

Social class was clearly important in providing this cultural backdrop to the Alps as well as enabling middle-class women access to the mountains, but it was the environment itself that proved to be the catalyst for change. The mountains provided the *mise-en-scène* for a way of experiencing an internal, personal sense of freedom loosened from social restrictions. It is, of course, well documented that many women felt freer when travelling or living abroad. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Mary Kingsley, Isabella Bird and Anna Jameson are just a sample of women who expressed such feelings.[25]

This study, however, has begun to reveal how the actions of the body in a given situation or environment were formative in the realisation of those different 'ways of being' experienced by these women. In this respect my work interweaves with those who have explored the wider meaning or effect of landscape.[26] John Wylie eloquently describes the oneness of people and the countryside, the phenomenological notion whereby landscape is only ever known by people's lived activities within a particular environment and not by

[25] Domosh and Seager 2001, 122; Foster and Mills 2002, 172–3.
[26] Debarbieux 2009; Macfarlane 2003.

reading, pictures or discourse.[27] Neither the body nor the land are subject or object but form a totality each immersed in and constantly influencing and creating the other. This phenomenological approach, which I have used when discussing embodiment and identity, also provides a more nuanced view of travel for historians. Free from providing only social, cultural and logistical details of journeys and geography, it helps to unearth the elusiveness of what it actually meant and felt for the individuals involved, of their place and relationship within a specific environment. The joyous sense of freedom expressed by Hirst, Holworthy and Havergal bear particular testament to that relationship with the mountain landscape experienced by many women in the Alps, who were not necessarily intrepid explorers like Kingsley or Bird.[28]

Invisibility.

A further aim of this thesis is to understand why women mountaineers have remained hidden for so long. The appendices show how women climbed the major alpine summits shortly after the first male ascent. In a few cases women, not men, were in fact the first to a summit. The quality of some women's climbing, therefore, seems unquestionably to have equalled many of their male contemporaries. Nevertheless, few people, either within the academy or outside, are aware of women's presence as mountaineers.

The way women saw themselves and how they projected their identity may be one reason for this. Chapter six showed that many women deflected possible criticism by conforming, to some extent, to prevailing ideas of femininity. Many avoided publicity and wrote nothing, others were often self-effacing and most ensured they dressed 'appropriately' – at least below the snowline. It seems probable this was a conscious decision at the time to create space to pursue their mountaineering relatively unhindered; an attempt to be inconspicuous or at least not overtly socially transgressive. In doing so they conformed to one set of gendered expectations even as they challenged others. Moreover, in silencing their own voices, women left the perception of men's dominance in the

[27] Wylie 2007, 162-179.

[28] Crane 1881, 133, 187; Five Ladies 2003, 58; Holworthy 1885, 32, 49.

mountains unchallenged and allowed women's activities, with their embrace of physicality and strenuous exercise, to remain largely hidden.

Men, however, held virtually all positions of power and authority; challenging this situation was difficult and lengthy. The time taken from the activities of the Langham Place women and their supporters, in the 1850s and 1860s, until full suffrage was eventually gained in 1928, bears testimony to this. It needed confidence, tenacity, resources and a thick skin. It is apposite that the only woman climber who lived her life apparently unconstrained by anyone or anything was Elizabeth Le Blond. She had the confidence befitting an aristocrat with a large inheritance obtained at an early age. Le Blond wrote freely, lived where she liked and married whom she pleased. She became the most well-known woman mountaineer. This arguably happened because she was unafraid to publish several books for a wide readership and had the confidence and connections to ignore any criticism. In short, she had the self-assurance more typical of a man of this period than a woman. The care most women climbers took negotiating the social expectations surrounding the binaries of public/private and male/female was more typical.

The caution shown by many of these women climbers about self-publicity has undoubtedly affected awareness of female climbers in the second half of the nineteenth century. But that is not the sole reason for their relative invisibility. Jane Austen, even though writing at the earlier date of 1817, summarised the power and influence men possessed and how taking the written word as unquestioned truth was inadvisable.

> Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything.[29]

Despite such a warning, histories of mountaineering have relied heavily on books written by men in both the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. These early accounts were exemplary of their time – periods when, as shown in chapters

[29] Austen 2013c, 1368.

three and six, women were discouraged from advertising activities that lay outside or on the edge of social expectations and when commentaries on history, politics and culture were frequently confined to the accomplishments and exploits of men.

Judith Butler has convincingly shown how repeated performance of certain gestures and behaviours can become associated with particular genders – this also applies to reiteration within texts. In other words, the more a certain activity is repeatedly associated with being either male or female, in books, newspapers, journals and opinion pieces, the more it may insidiously be accepted. Such repetitive association helps create what becomes the stereotypical view. It is hardly surprising men wrote mainly about their own endeavours; moreover, they had some reason to exclude or minimise women's efforts in order not to diminish their own accomplishments. Even more recent histories of mountaineering have often made little effort to search for women's contribution and in this respect have left the Victorian accounts largely unquestioned.[30] Although women mountaineers are undeniably harder to find than men, this thesis has shown there are paper trails to follow, sources that provide compelling evidence of an active female presence in the mountains.

Some historians have exacerbated the poor visibility of female mountaineers by dismissing women's travel writing itself, claiming it is neither literature nor travel.[31] Even where attempts have been made to resurrect women's accounts, female travellers, including mountaineers, are often depicted as unrepresentative, exceptional women or eccentric mavericks.[32] The titles of such accounts – *The Blessings of a Good Thick Skirt, Ladies on the Loose* – have a mildly flippant tone that is not seen in similar studies of men's travel; such an approach dilutes the importance of the writing.[33] The more women's presence and their contributions are ridiculed, the feebler the imprint they left behind becomes; memoirs, letters and diaries are thus too easily deemed unimportant or ornamental and become increasingly dismissed or mislaid. Literary scholar

[30] Fleming 2000; Ring 2000; Schut 2013.
[31] Bassnett 2002; Fussell 1980;Mills 1991, 27,33–35.
[32] Brown 2002; Clark 1953; Lunn 1900; Mazel 1994; Middleton 1993; Miller 1965; Ring 2000.
[33] Bassnett 2002, 226.

Hilary Fraser's recent work, for example, has shown how critics such as Ruskin belittled nineteenth-century female art historians, which has resulted in these pioneers, like mountaineers, being largely overlooked.[34]

Contemporary Relevance

We might presume that issues women climbers confronted in the nineteenth century have little relevance to contemporary life. Although most women in western societies do not suffer the same restrictions experienced in the past, those in many other countries and cultures remain subjugated, poorly educated, impoverished and profoundly restricted in their freedom of movement. Crucially, as in the nineteenth century, control over women's bodies – their dress, performance and physical experience – lies at the heart of many male dominated societies. Western media and advertising have of course also created and widely disseminated idealised female images that dominate, even manipulate, the aspirations of many women, particularly the young. In 2015, despite the endeavours of a second wave feminist movement over the last fifty years, the constraint and depiction of the female body remains an important issue internationally.

Within mountaineering, women's accomplishments and the general perception of female climbers have changed considerably. Today, women are acknowledged to be better climbers than men in some respects; they have greater flexibility and strength to weight ratios. Climbing is extremely popular with women and many of the world's leading rock climbers are female. Nevertheless, men largely occupy positions of power and authority in this field to the present day. For example, six out of seven members on the British Mountaineering Council's executive in 2014 are men and few of the 'officers' of the AC are women. The Ladies Alpine Club (LAC), formed in 1907, merged with the AC in 1974. Since then there has been only one female AC president and even she was temporary because the previous incumbent died in office.[35] She was not reselected the following year.

[34] Fraser 2014.
[35] Band 2006, 327.

In certain respects, the merger of the two clubs did not help develop women's mountaineering. Previously, their own institution, run by women for women, was self-evidently about female climbing. Amalgamating with a larger men's club, unsurprisingly, diluted their identity almost to the point of invisibility. Perhaps because of that dilution, women formed or joined other women's groups such as the Pinnacle Club, the international Rendez-Vous Haute Montagne and various national all-female climbing clubs.[36] Currently there are fewer women members of the AC than when the LAC merged with it. This raises the question whether, in some circumstances, less powerful groups may be well advised to remain separate until such time as their influence matches the dominant partner?

Clearly there have been great advances since the inception of female mountaineering by Lucy Walker and her contemporaries. Women who climb in western countries are free to do so when, where and how they like. They are no longer subject to constraining social mores or generalised and normative medical diktats; they understand their body's capabilities in a way that nineteenth-century women had to strive hard for. Despite this, and their undoubted prowess on climbing walls, women nevertheless remain in the minority actually *in* the mountains; less than 1% of all members of the International Federation of Mountain Guides (IFMG) worldwide are female; any casual observer of groups staying in a hut or ascending a peak will notice the predominance of men.[37] Mountaineering, as opposed to rock-climbing, seems to have retained a more heroic masculine image. Interestingly *The New York Times* recently deemed it a 'cultural inheritance';[38] an example, if one was needed, of the relevance of historical knowledge to the assessment of contemporary life. Certainly the criticism levelled at Himalayan climber Alison Hargreaves after her fatal 1995 climb of K2, which left two young children without a mother, stood in stark contrast to the comparative lack of criticism of six fellow male climbers

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[36] http://www.womenclimb.co.uk/events-2/womens-climbing-clubs-uk/ accessed 21 September 2014

[37] IFMGA 2014.

[38] "Few Women Work as Professional Climbing Guides," *New York Times,* May 22, 2010.

who also died and left families.[39] Contemporary culture obviously still finds it hard to shake off gendered preconceptions where danger, physical hardship and exploration is concerned.

Summary

This thesis has unearthed the often forgotten lives of Victorian women climbers. It has placed their activities in context, and traced the complexity of the self-representation and public image of these pioneers amidst the changing social and cultural conditions of their time. A central focus has been the status, perception and use of the female body, physically and emotionally, in a given environment. By considering the quantitative and qualitative nature of women's mountaineering alongside its cultural representation, this thesis contests the idea that the mountains were in reality ever an exclusively male space – even as it shows that publicity surrounding women's feats in the mountains was limited. Moreover, it reveals the often complex dynamics of gender relations that existed within a sector of the middle class where the prevailing rhetoric of masculinity and femininity did not always match reality. Finally, it suggests women's relative invisibility as climbers is the result of a number of factors; men's dominance in most aspects of life, women's acquiescence in such social mores and insufficient historical research.

Nevertheless, many women travellers amongst the Alps lived out George Eliot's advice 'to walk high' rather than ' crawl in safety.' They also could not

> Bear to think what life would be
> With high hope shrunk to endurance, stunted aims
> A self sunk down to look with level eyes
> On low achievements. (George Eliot, *Armgart* 1870)

39 Barnard 2002; Gilchrist 2007; Frohlick 2006.

Appendices

Notes

Names of places and mountains have been spelt in accordance with the source used.

Abbreviations

AJ: Alpine Journal

CAF: Club Alpin Francais

DNB: Dictionary of National Biography

GM: Grand Mulet Hut Record

LAC: Ladies Alpine Club

Mumm: Alpine Register 1923

Reference such as K11 Aloys Pollinger = führerbüche catalogue number in AC archive

WCP: William Coolidge Archive, Zentralbibliotech, Zurich

	APPENDIX 1	**FEMALE FIRST ASCENTS**	**BOLD = 1ST ASCENT BY MAN OR WOMAN**
YEAR	**MOUNTAIN (HEIGHT metres)**	**NAME**	**TYPE OF ASCENT**
1786	Mont Buet	Mary, Elizabeth & Jane Parminter	Craig 2013, 35
1854	Mont Blanc 4810	Mrs Hamilton	1st British woman
1855	**Monch (4105)**	**Countess Dora d'istria**	**Contested 1st ascent**
1857	**Monte Rosa**	**Emma Forman**	**1st female ascent**
1858	Altels (3636)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1860	Strahlhorn (4190)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1860	Piz Tschierva (3546)	Fraulein Thea	1st female ascent
1861	**Col d'Argentière (3552)**	**Emma Winkworth**	**1st passage**
	Finsteraarhorn (4273)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1862	Zumstein spitze (4563)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1863	Jungfrau (4166)	Emma Winkworth	1st female ascent
1863	Alphubel (4206)	Emma Winkworth	1st female ascent
1863	Aletschhorn (4192)	Emma Winkworth	1st female ascent
1863	Saurenjoch (2859)	Emma Winkworth	1st passage
1863	**Balfrin or Balinfirnhorn (3802)**	**Elizabeth Spence-Watson**	**1st ascent**
1863	Col de la Jungfrau (3454)	Elizabeth Spence-Watson	Private journal
1864	Grand Combin (4314)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1864	Eiger (3970)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
	Rimpfischhorn(4199)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent; 2nd ever
	Balmhorn (3698)	**Lucy Walker**	**1st ascent**
	Grivola (3969)	Lucy Walker	? 1st female ascent
	Monte Viso (3841)	Alessandra Boarelli & Cecilia Fillia	1st female ascent
1865	Wetterhorn (3692)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1866	Weisshorn(4506)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
	Dom (4545)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
	Ortlerspitze (3905)	Elizabeth Spence-Watson	1st female ascent
1867	Schreckhorn (4080)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
	Monch (4107)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
	Lyskamm (4538)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1868	Gross Viescherhorn (4025)	Lucy Walker	? 1st female ascent
	Nesthorn (3903)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent
	Piz Bernina (4049)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1869	Grandes-Jorasses (4208)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent; 4th ever
1869	**Sesia Joch (4424)**	**Anna & Ellen Pigeon**	**1st descent by either sex**
1869	Jungfraujoch (3470)	Lucy Walker	? 1st passage by woman
1870	Aiguille Verte(4122)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
1870	**Meije Centrale (3974)**	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
1870	**Aiguille de Moine (3412)**	**Straton & Lewis Lloyd**	**1st ascent**
1871	Matterhorn (4487)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent

	APPENDIX 1	**FEMALE FIRST ASCENTS**	**BOLD = 1ST ASCENT BY MAN OR WOMAN**
YEAR	**MOUNTAIN (HEIGHT metres)**	**NAME**	**TYPE OF ASCENT**
1871	Castor (4222)	Lucy Walker	1st female ascent
	Weisshorn NE Face (4506)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent; 2nd ever
	Matterhorn - Zermatt to Breuil (4487)	Meta Brevoort	1st female traverse of Matterhorn, Switz. to Italy
	Dent Blanche (4364)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent by Wandfluhjoch, 2nd ever
	Bietschorn (3934)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent, 3rd ever
	Moming pass (3745)	**Anna and Ellen Pigeon**	**1st by this new route**
1872	Monch from Wengen (4107)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent
	Unterbachhorn (3554)	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
	Gspaltenhorn (3436)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent
	Gross Doldenhorn (3647)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent
1873	Col de la Tour Ronde (3627)	Mrs Millot	1st passage
1873	Col de l'Aiguille de plan (3673)	Mrs Millot	1st passage
	Taschhorn (4491)	Lucy Walker	? 1st female ascent
1873	Zinal Rothorn (4223)	Lucy Walker	? 1st female ascent
	Grande Ruine (3765)	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
1873	**Aiguille Sept. d'arves (3363)**	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
	Le Rateau (3809)	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
	Matterhorn - Breuil to Zermatt (4487)	Anna and Ellen Pigeon	1st passage
1873	**Aiguille & Dome de Gouter (4304)**	**Isabella Sraton**	**? 1st but definitely early female climb**
1874	**Jungfrau in winter (4166)**	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st winter ascent either sex**
1874	**Wetterhorn in winter (3692)**	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st winter ascent either sex**
	Ochsenhorn (2912)	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
	Mont Thuria (3615)	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
	Pointe Margeurite on Grand Ruine (3251)	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**
1875	Aiguille de Blaitiere (3522)	Meta Brevoort	1st female ascent
	Aiguille du Midi (3842)	Isabella Straton	1st female ascent
1875	Aiguille de Blatiere - north summit (3522)	Isabella Straton	1st female ascent
1875	**Pointe Isabella (3761)**	**Isabella Straton**	**1st ascent**
1875	**Weismiess (4031) East face**	**Margaret Jackson**	**1st ascent**
1876	**Mont Blanc (4810)**	**Isabella Straton**	**1st winter ascent**
1876	Les Dents du Midi (3257)	Isabella Straton	1st female ascent
1876	**Fusshorn (3628)**	**Meta Brevoort**	**1st ascent**

	APPENDIX 1	**FEMALE FIRST ASCENTS**	**BOLD = 1ST ASCENT BY MAN OR WOMAN**
YEAR	**MOUNTAIN (HEIGHT metres)**	**NAME**	**TYPE OF ASCENT**
1876	Traverse of Grand Paradiso from Cogne to Valsaveranche (4061)	Emily Hornby	1st female ascent
1877	**Traverse Furgegenjoch / Furggrat /Theodulhorn**	**Margaret Leman**	**1st passage**
	West ridge of the Dom (4545)	**Margaret Jackson**	**1st ascent**
1878	Matterhorn - Zmutt ridge (4487)	Lily Bristow	1st descent
1879	**Traverse 3 summits if piz palu (3901)**	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st full traverse**
1879	**Pointe de la Perseverance (2901)**	**Isabella Straton**	**1st ascent**
1881	Mont Pourri (3779)	Emily Hornby	1st female ascent
1881	Mont Pelvoux (3946)	Margaret Leman	1st female ascent
1882	**Col de Tacul in winter(3337)**	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st crossing**
1882	**Zinal Rothorn (4221)**	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st traverse Zinal - Zermatt**
1882	**Taschhorn from SE (4491)**	**Margaret Jackson**	**1st ascent**
1883	Dent du Geant(4013)	Elizabeth Le Blond	1st female ascent
1883	**Aiguille de Midi - winter (3842)**	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st winter ascent**
	Col d'Argentière – winter (1996)	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st winter passage**
	Traverse of the Mellichenhorn (3912)	**Margaret Leman**	**1st passage**
1883	**Dent Blanche (4364) W arete/ descend Ferpecle ridge**	**Margaret Jackson**	**1st ascent/descent**
1882	**Weismies- North Ridge(4031)**	**Emma Paine**	**1st ascent**
1884	**Bieshorn - East peak(4153)**	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st ascent**
	Grand Dru, (3754)	Margaret Jackson	1st female ascent
1884	Grand Charmoz, (3445)	Margaret Jackson	1st female ascent
1887	**Teufelsgrat ridge, Taschhorn (4491)**	**Mary Mummery**	**1st ascent**
1887	**Lauteraarhorn (4042)**	**Margaret Jackson**	**1st winter ascent**
	Gross Fiescherhorn (4049)	**Margaret Jackson**	**1st winter ascent**
	Traverse of Jungfrau (4273)	**Margaret Jackson**	**1st winter ascent**
	Aiguille de Bionnassay arête (4052)	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st ascent**
1888	La Meije (3984)	Katherine Richardson	1st female ascent
	Aiguille de la Za - west face (3662)	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st new route**
1888	**Grand Charmoz, (3445)**	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st female traverse**
	Barre des Ecrins (4102)	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st traverse from la Bérarde**

	APPENDIX 1	FEMALE FIRST ASCENTS	BOLD = 1ST ASCENT BY MAN OR WOMAN
YEAR	**MOUNTAIN (HEIGHT metres)**	**NAME**	**TYPE OF ASCENT**
1888	**Pigne D'Arolla (3796)**	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st new route**
1889	Aiguille de Chardonnet by new route (3822)	Katherine Richardson	1st female ascent
	Traverse Dru from Petit to Grand	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st new route**
	N-S traverse of Grand charmoz (3445)	Lily Bristow, Miss Pasteur	1st female ascent, no guide
1889	**La Nonne (3340)**	**The Misses pasteur**	**1st ascent**
1890	**Castor(4222)**	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st descent by the North face**
1890	**Aiguille du Chardonnet (3824)**	**Katherine Richardson**	**1st ascent south face**
1890	Meije traverse (3984)	Mlle Marie & Louise Lachariere	1st female traverse
1891	La Grande Casse ,Vanoise (3855)	Mlle Marie & Louise Lachariere	1st female ascent
1891	Southern Aiguille d'Arves (3514)	Mary Paillon & Katherine Richardson	1st female ascent
1891	**Piz palu - winter (3901)**	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st winter ascent**
	S E ridge of Pointe de Zinal (3789)	**Mabel Peyton- later Mabel Neruda**	**1st ascent**
1891	**L'Evêque (3716)**	**Isabel and Mary Pasteur**	**1st ascent**
1892	**Cima Wilma (2777)**	**Mabel Neruda**	**1st ascent**
1892	Traverse of Grepon(3482)	Lily Bristow	1st female ascent
1893	Eastern peak, Meije (3890)	Mary Paillon & Katherine Richardson	1st female ascent
	Petit Dru (3733)	Lily Bristow	1st guideless female ascent
1893	Zinal Rothorn (4221)	Lily Bristow	1st guideless female ascent
1893	**Grand Charmoz, 3445**	**Isabel and Mary Pasteur**	**1st female traverse, S to N**
1893	**Disgrazia (3678) winter**	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st winter ascent**
1896	**Piz Zupo (3996)- winter**	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st winter ascent**
	Crast Aguzza(3869) - winter	**Elizabeth Le Blond**	**1st winter ascent**
	Drei Blumen (2489)	**Miss Pennington Leigh**	**1st winter ascent**
1896	**Cima d'Alberghetto 2547m, Torre del Giubileo, Campanile della Regina Vittoria, Monte Lastei D'Agner, Sasso delle Capre - all in Pala range**	**Beatrice Tomasson**	**1st ascent**
1897	**NE face Monte Zebru - ice route**	**Beatrice Tomasson**	**1st ascent**
1898	**SW face Ortler (3905)**	**Beatrice Tomasson**	**1st ascent**
1898	**S face Dent di Mesdi**	**Beatrice Tomasson**	**1st ascent**

	APPENDIX 1	FEMALE FIRST ASCENTS	BOLD = 1ST ASCENT BY MAN OR WOMAN
YEAR	**MOUNTAIN (HEIGHT metres)**	**NAME**	**TYPE OF ASCENT**
1900	**S face of Marmolada di Penia (3343)**	**Beatrice Tomasson**	**1st ascent**
1901	**Mittelgruppe engelhorner(2450-2600) - 10 unclimbed routes or summits in the range**	**Gertrude Bell**	**1st ascent**
1901	**Klein Simmelistock (2380)**	**Gertrude Bell**	**1st ascent**
1902	**Traverse of Lauteraarhorn-Schreckhorn (4078)**	**Gertrude Bell**	**1st ascent**
	Lyskamm (4538) North-west Spur	**Mrs Roberts-Thomson**	**1st ascent**
1902	**Lyskamm (4538) SE Wall**	**Grace Filder**	**1st ascent**
1903	**Aiguille de Bionnassay(4052) west ridge**	**Fraulein Eleonore Hasenclever**	**1st ascent**

APPENDIX 2			
Women who climbed 4000-metre Peaks. Excluding Those With Individual Appendices			.
NAME	**MOUNTAIN**	**DATE**	**Reference source**
Marie Paradis	Mont Blanc- 1st female ascent	1808	
Henriette d'Angeville	Mont Blanc	1838	
Mrs Hamilton	Mont Blanc - 1st British woman	1854	A Tourist.*The Times* 1854
Emma Foreman	Mont Blanc	1856	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Miss Russell	Mont Blanc	1857	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
	Monte Rosa- 1st female ascent	1857	K5 Mathew Tagwaulder
Jane Forster	Mont Blanc	1859	Mumm
Jane Forster	Monte Rosa	1860	Mumm
Miss D Robertioz	Monte Rosa	1860	K5 Mathew Tagwaulder
Mary Isabel Straton	Mont Blanc	1861	GM
Unknown	Monte Rosa	1861	K8 Johann Tagwaulder
Emma Winkworth	Mont Blanc	1861	K15 J.J Bennen
Emma Winkworth	Jungfrau- 1st female ascent	1863	Utterson 1863
Emma Winkworth	Monte Rosa	1863	K15 J.J Bennen
Emma Winkworth	Aletschorn- 1st female ascent	1863	Utterson 1863
Emma Winkworth	Alphubel traverse	1863	K15 J.J Bennen
Mr & Mrs Stewart	Mont Blanc	1864	K36 Laurent Lanier
Sylvie Couttet	Mont Blanc	1865	Paillon 1896
Ellen Braudraw	Breithorn	1865	K21 Imboden
Emmeline Lewis Lloyd	Mont Blanc	1865	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mme Derennes	Mont Blanc	1865	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Lady Libright	Mont Blanc	1865	GM
Misses Bernard	Dome de Gouter	1867	GM
Mrs Alston Bishop	Mont Blanc (4810)	1867	Mumm
Mrs Alston Bishop	Monte Rosa	1867	Mumm
Mrs Alston Bishop	Breithorn	1867	Mumm
Elise Brunner	Monte Rosa	1867	K8 Johann Tagwaulder
Jane Forster	Mont Blanc	1868	GM
Mary Whitehead	Monte Rosa	1868	K21 Imboden
Mary Whitehead	Breithorn	1868	K21 Imboden
Miss Jackson (not Margaret)	Breithorn	1869	K8 Johann Tagwaulder
Elise Brunner	Schreckhorn	1869	Wirz 154
Unknown German lady	Monte Rosa	1869	WCP 2049.1 #46
Unknown French Lady	Monte Rosa	1869	WCP 2049.1 #45

APPENDIX 2	4000M PEAKS CLIMBED BY WOMEN		
NAME	**MOUNTAIN**	**DATE**	**Reference source**
2 unknown 'ladies'	Dom de Mischabel	1869	WCP 2049.1 #46
Mary Isabel Straton	Mont Blanc	1871	GM
Ms Stollard	Mont Blanc	1871	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Eliza ?Amphlett	Breithorn	1871	K8 Johann Tagwaulder
Annie Smith	Monte Rosa	1871	K13 Peter Tagwaulder
Mrs Leman	Strahlhorn	1871	Mumm
Mrs Leman	Breithorn	1871	Mumm
Mrs Leman	Monte Rosa	1871	Mumm
Mrs Dames	Monte Rosa	1872	K21 Imboden
Mrs Dames	Breithorn	1872	K21 Imboden
Amy Passingham	Monte Rosa	1872	K39 Imseng
Millicent Fawcett	Monte Rosa	1872	K11 Pollinger
Misses Hay-Murray	Mont Blanc	1872	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mrs Millot	Mont blanc	1872	Mumm
Mrs Millot	Monch	1873	Mumm
Mrs Millot	Balmenhorn	1873	Mumm
Mrs Porcher	Monte Rosa	1873	K39 Imseng
Edith & Bertha Wills	Mont Blanc	1873	GM
Mrs Alston Bishop	Matterhorn	1873	Mumm
Mrs Alston Bishop	Jungfrau	1873	Mumm
Mrs Millot	Mont blanc	1873	GM
Mrs Millot	Matterhorn	1873	Whymper 1900
Misses Kinahan	Mont Blanc	1873	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mme Ganard	Mont Blanc	1873	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Grace Hirst	Mont Blanc	1874	Five Ladies
Mme De Zumelzu (Spanish)	Mont Blanc	1874	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mrs Millot	Matterhorn	1874	Mumm
Mrs Millot	Monte rosa	1874	Mumm
Mrs Millot	Rimpfischhorn	1874	Mumm
Mrs Millot	Dom	1874	Mumm
Mrs Millot	Finsteraarhorn	1874	Mumm
Mrs Millot	schreckhorn	1874	4th female ascent
Marion Neilson	Mont Blanc	1874	Five Ladies
Katherine Parker	Mont Blanc	1874	GM
Fanny Richardson	Mont Blanc	1874	Five Ladies
Mrs Alston Bishop	Zinal Rothorn	1874	Mumm
Elizabeth (surname missing)	Matterhorn - italian ridge	1875	K6 Alexander Burgener
Frederica & Katherine Plunkett	Eiger	1875	K38 Peter Egger

APPENDIX 2	4000M PEAKS CLIMBED BY WOMEN		
NAME	**MOUNTAIN**	**DATE**	**Reference source**
Mme Vian	Mont Blanc	1875	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mme Sicco	Mont Blanc	1875	Vallot Annuaire CAF
Miss Mary ?	Mont Blanc	1875	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Frederica & Katherine Plunkett	Mont Blanc	1875	K38 Peter Egger
Frederica & Katherine Plunkett	Eiger (3970)	1875	K38 Peter Egger
Frederica & Katherine Plunkett	Monte Rosa	1876	WCP 2049.1 #23
Frederica & Katherine Plunkett	Strahlhorn	1876	WCP 2049.1 #23
Mr & Mrs Eccles	Mont Blanc	1876	WCP 2049.1 #14
Mrs Falkiner	Mont Blanc	1876	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mrs Parker	Mont Blanc	1876	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mme Caron	Mont Blanc	1877	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Margaret Leman	Matterhorn	1877	Mumm
Margaret Leman	Weisshorn	1877	Mumm
Margaret Leman	Weissmies	1877	Mumm
Louisa Tyndall	Aletschhorn	1877	Louisa's diary, Royal Institution
Elizabeth Pimm	Breithorn	1877	K39 Imseng
Maria Webb	Breithorn	1877	K39 Imseng
Mrs Alston Bishop	Breithorn	1877	Mumm
Anonymous	Breithorn	1877	Chambers Journal 1877
Miss Griffiths	Mont Blanc	1878	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Panei	Mont Blanc	1878	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
?Duchess Zeuthin-Schulin	Mont Blanc	1878	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Margaret Leman	Mont Blanc	1878	Mumm
Lily Bristow	Matterhorn	1879	
Mrs Curtis Lemm	Schreckhorn	1879	L4 Christian Bohren
Mrs Curtis Lemm	Finsteraarhorn	1879	L4 Christian Bohren
Mrs Curtis Lemm	Jungfrau	1879	L4 Christian Bohren
Mrs Curtis Lemm	Eiger (3970)	1879	L4 Christian Bohren
Mme Cazin	Mont Blanc	1879	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Alice Finney (nee Hodge)	Matterhorn	1880	Mumm

APPENDIX 2	**4000M PEAKS CLIMBED BY WOMEN**		
NAME	**MOUNTAIN**	**DATE**	**Reference source**
Margaret Leman	Rimpfischhorn	1880	Mumm
Margaret Leman	Rothorn	1880	Mumm
Anna Voigt	Jungfrau	1880	L1 & K38 Peter Bohren
Anna Voigt	Aggasizhorn(3958m)	1880	L1 & K38 Peter Bohren
Unknown	Aletschorn	1880	K39 Imseng
Margaret Leman	Pollux	1881	K45 Andermatten
Mlle Schies	Mont Blanc	1881	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
?Ducret de Langes	Mont Blanc	1881	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mrs Chafy-Chaby	Mont Blanc	1881	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mrs Widdington	Mont Blanc	1882	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mrs Alison Slingsby	Eiger(3970)	1882	L2 Peter Baumann
Lina Perrazi	Breithorn	1883	LAC
Mlle Raoul-Duval	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mme Le Prince	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Miss Marriage	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle De Rolland	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Miss Bridgeford	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Miss Kinnear	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Pop	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Poncius	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Quennessen	Mont Blanc	1883	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Lina Perrazi	Breithorn	1883	LAC
Emily Paine	Weissmeis	1884	Five ladies
Lina Perrazi	Lyskamm	1884	LAC
Lina Perrazi	Signalkuppe	1885	LAC
Mlle de Bronderer	Mont Blanc	1885	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Lina Perrazi	Castor	1886	LAC
Miss Gardiner	Mont Blanc	1886	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mme Pin	Mont Blanc	1886	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Hassler	Mont Blanc	1886	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887

APPENDIX 2	4000M PEAKS CLIMBED BY WOMEN		
NAME	**MOUNTAIN**	**DATE**	**Reference source**
Mlle Couttet	Mont Blanc	1886	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Schuler	Mont Blanc	1886	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Wallon	Mont Blanc	1886	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle Hasenorl	Mont Blanc	1887	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mlle De Goutcharow x2	Mont Blanc	1887	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mme Vallot	Mont Blanc	1887	Vallot Annuaire CAF 1887
Mary Mummery	Teufelsgrat, taschhorn	1887	Mummery 1908
Mary Mummery	Matterhorn	1887	Mummery 1908
Mary Mummery	Jungfrau	1887	Mummery 1908
Mary Mummery	Obergabelhorn	1887	Mummery 1908
Mrs Curtis Lemm	Mischabelhorn	1888	L4 Christian Bohren
Hilda Brown	Rothorn	1888	LAC
Hilda Brown	Taschhorn	1888	LAC
Hilda Brown	Castor	1888	LAC
Hilda Brown	Alphubel	1889	LAC
Lina Perazzi	Allalinhorn	1888	LAC
Flossie Morse	Mont Blanc	1888	
Lina Perrazi	Monte Rosa	1889	LAC
Mary Pasteur	Traverse Grand Charmoz	1889	Mumm
Hilda Brown	Weissmies	1890	LAC
Hilda Brown	Piz Bernina	1890	LAC
Mrs Farrar	Matterhorn traverse	1890	Mumm
Lily Bristow	North Ridge Zinal Rothorn	1891	Mummery, guideless
Lily Bristow	Matterhorn - italian ridge	1892	Mumm
Annie & Mary Pasteur	La Meije (3984)	1892	O11 Ulrich Almer
Edith Stott	Eiger	1892	L2 Peter Baumann
Mrs Vail	Monte Rosa	1892	K9 Burgener
Mrs Vail	Zinal Rothorn	1892	K9 Burgener
Fanny Workman	Mont Blanc	1892	AJ 1992
Col & Mrs Farrar	Traverse of Matterhorn	1892	K20 Daniel Maquinaz
Lily Bristow	Matterhorn - Italian ridge	1893	AJ 1942
Elsa Von Kuffner	Lagginhorn	1895	K6 Alexander Burgener
Hilda Brown	Monte Rosa	1895	LAC
Katherine Smith	Allalinhorn	1896	LAC
Fanny Workman	Matterhorn	1896	AJ 1992
Mary Whitehouse	Monte Rosa	1897	LAC
Sophie Nicholls	Matterhorn	1898	LAC
Hilda Brown	Zinal Rothorn	1898	LAC

APPENDIX 2	4000M PEAKS CLIMBED BY WOMEN		
NAME	**MOUNTAIN**	**DATE**	**Reference source**
Hilda Brown	Obergabelhorn	1898	LAC
Louise Nettleton	Matterhorn	1899	LAC
Sophie Nicholls	Zinal Rothorn	1899	LAC
Sophie Nicholls	Matterhorn	1899	LAC
Beatrice Taylor	Rimpfischhorn	1899	LAC
Gertrude Bell	Barre des Ecrins	1899	Bell 1928
Edith Cooper	Matterhorn	1899	K9 Alexander Burgener
Morriston- davies	Matterhorn	1899	LAC
Miss M Osborne	Breithorn	1899	LAC
Miss M Osborne	Monte Rosa	1899	LAC
Louise Nettleton	Monte Rosa	1900	LAC
Louise Nettleton	Matterhorn - italian ridge	1900	LAC
Gertrude Bell	Mont Blanc	1900	
Gertrude Bell	Lauteraarhorn-Schreckhorn traverse	1902	Bell 1928
Gertrude Bell	Finsteraarhorn NE face attempt	1902	Bell 1928
Gertrude Bell	Traverse of Matterhorn	1904	Bell 1929a
Gertrude Bell	Lyskamm	1904	Bell 1929a
Gertrude Bell	Signalkuppe	1904	Bell 1929a
Gertrude Bell	Zumsteinspitze	1904	Bell 1929a
Gertrude Bell	Dufourspitze	1904	Bell 1929a
Suzanne Magnet	Grepon	1904	Alexander Burgener
Suzanne Magnet	Teufelsgrat	1904	Alexander Burgener
Suzanne Magnet	Zinal Rothorn	1904	Alexander Burgener
Dorothea Toeplitz	Rimpfischhorn	1904	Alexander Burgener
Margaret Dowie Urquhart	Monte Rosa	1908	Victor Furrer
Beatrice Taylor	monte rosa	1909	LAC
Margaret Dowie Urquhart	Obergabelhorn	1909	Victor Furrer
Margaret Dowie Urquhart	Weisshorn	1909	Victor Furrer
Margaret Dowie Urquhart	Zinal Rothorn	1909	Victor Furrer
Beatrice Taylor	Dent Blanche	1909	LAC
Beatrice Taylor	Obergabelhorn	1909	LAC

APPENDIX 3A		Lucy Walker 1836 -1917		98 expeditions with 3 failures. BOLD = 4000m peaks
				Reference Gardiner 1917,
YEAR	DATE	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Location & Notes on climbs.
1858	July	Theodul	3322	Zermatt to Valtournanche
		Monte Moro	2862	Saas Fee to Macugnaga
1859	July	Titlis	3238	
		Oberaarjoch	3233	Grimsel to Eggishorn
	July 8,9	Strahleck	3340	Grindelwald and Grimsel
	15th	Tschingel	2824	Lauterbrunnen to Kandersteg
	18th	Altels	3636	1st female ascent
1860	July 7,8	**attempt Jungfrau**	**4166**	
	13	Weissthor	3609	Zermatt to Macugnaga
	16	Adler pass	3798	Zermatt to Saas Fee
	?	**Strahlhorn**	**4190**	1st female ascent
	21st	Mont Velan	3727	Pennine Alps
	25th	Col de Geant ?1861	3371	Mont Blanc Massif
	28th	Col d'herens	3480	Zermatt to Evolene
1862	July 1st	Gauli pass	3206	Grimsel to Meiringen
	8th	Oberaarhorn	3631	Bernese Alps
	9th	**Finsteraarhorn**	**4273**	1st female ascent
	12th	Alphubel pass	3802	Zermatt to Saas Fee
	15th	**Monte Rosa**	**4634**	5th female ascent with Marie Cathrein
	19th	Triftjoch	3540	Zermatt to Zinal
	23rd	Aiguille de Gouter	3863	Mont Blanc Massif
	25th 26th	**Mont Blanc**	**4810**	
1863	july 16, 17	**Zumsteinspitze**	**4563**	1st female ascent
1864	July 1st	Grivola attempt	3969	E Graian mountains
	4, 5	**Grand Combin**	**4314**	? 1st female ascent
	7	Col de Sonadon	3489	Bourg st Pierre to val de bagne
	8	Col de la Reuse de l'Arolla	3200	Haute Route
	9	Col de Valpelline	3562	Haute Route
	12	**Rimpfischhorn**	**4199**	1st female ascent
	14, 16	**Aletschorn**	**4192**	Bernese Alps
	21	Balmhorn	3698	1st ascent
	25	Eiger	3970	1st female ascent
1865	Jun-23	Sustenhorn	3503	Uri alps
	27, 28	**Jungfrau**	**4166**	Bernese alps
	4,5	Moming pass	3745	Zermatt to Zinal

APPENDIX 3A		Lucy Walker 1836 -1917		**BOLD = 4000 metre summit**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Location, Notes on climb**
1865	8	**Breithorn**	**4164**	Pennine alps
	10, 11	Grivola	3969	Graian Alps
1866	Jun-23	Monchjoch	3560	Grindelwald to Eggishorn
	27, 28	Wetterhorn	3692	Bernese alps
	Jul-06	Ewigshneehorn	3331	Bernese alps
	9	**Weisshorn**	**4506**	1st female ascent
	13, 14	**Dom**	**4545**	1st female ascent
	17	Biesjoch	3549	Randa to Turtmann
1867	Aug 13, 14	**Monch**	**4105**	Bernese alps
		Monchjoch	3560	Bernese alps
	19, 20	**Schreckhorn**	**4080**	1st female ascent
	26, 27	Blumlisalp	3671	Bernese alps
1868	Jun-26	Mont Pourri attempt	3779	Vanoise
	Jul-02	Col de Géant	3365	Mont Blanc massif
	8	Col du Tour	3280	Chamonix to Orsieres
	12	Pigne d'Arolla	3796	Pennine alps
	13	Col de Valcournera	3147	Valpelline to Val Tournanche
	14	Theodul	3322	Pennine alps
	20	**Lyskamm**	**4538**	?1st female ascent
	23,24	**Gross Fiescherhorn**	**4025**	Bernese alps
		Monchjoch	3658	Bernese alps
1869	June 28, 29	Dachstein	2995	Austria
	Jul-09	Watzmann	2713	Germany - 3rd highest peak
	16	Hintereis pass	3460	Austria
	18, 19	Ortler	3905	South Tyrol
	23, 24	**Piz Bernina**	**4049**	Engadine
1870	Jun-24	Uri Rothstock	2932	Bernese alps
	27, 28	Triftlimmie	3540	Rhone glacier to Gadmental
	29, 30	Lauteraarjoch	3156	Grindelwald to Grimsel
	Jul-06	Jungfraujoch	3470	Bernese alps
	9	Beichgrat	3136	Lotschental to Bel Alp
	10, 11	Baltschiederhorner	3200	Bernese alps
	19, 20	**Aiguille Verte**	**4122**	1st female ascent- Whymper couloir
	23	Buet	3096	Aiguille Rouges, Chamonix

APPENDIX 3A		**Lucy Walker 1836 -1917**		**BOLD = 4000 metre summit**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Location, Notes on climb**
1871	Jun-24	Diablerets	3210	Bernese alps
	Jul-01	Wetterlucke	3200	Bernese alps
	5	Monte Leone	3552	Lepontine alps
	8	**Castor**	**4230**	? 1st female ascent
	8	**Felikjoch**	**4063**	Route to/from castor
	10	Schwarzthor	3741	Zermatt to Ayas
	13	Weissthor	3580	Zermatt to Macugnaga
	15	Balfrin	3802	Pennine alps
	17, 18	**Weisshorn attempt**	**4505**	Pennine alps
	20,21	**Matterhorn**	**4487**	1st female ascent
1873	Jun-20	Titlis	3238	Engelberg
	23	Wendenjoch	2604	Engelberg to Gadmental
	July 3,4	**Jungfrau from Wengen**	**4166**	Bernese alps
	9,10	**Taschorn**	**4491**	1st female ascent
	11	Weisthor	3580	
	14	Monte Moro	2862	Saas Fee to Macugnaga
	17,18	**Weisshorn**	**4505**	Pennine alps
	19	Riffelhorn	2931	Pennine alps
	22	Col Durand	3474	Zermatt to Zinal
	26	**Zinal Rothorn**	**4221**	
1875	Jul-07	Wildstrubel	3243	Bernese alps
	14,15	**Allalinhorn**	**4027**	Pennine alps
1876	Sep-03	Col de Seilon	3200	Val de Bagnes to Val d'heremence
	10	Passo d'Antrona	2839	Saas valley to Antrona valley
1877	Jun-28	Galenstock	3585	Urner alps
	Jul-05	weissthor	3580	
	Jul-12	**Mischabelhorn or the Dom**	**4545**	Pennine alps
	Jul-12	**Alphubelhorn**	**4206**	Pennine alps
1879	Jun-20	Col de Collon	3130	Arolla to Aosta
	26,27	Monte Viso	3841	Cottian alps
	Jul-02	Col du Mont Corve	?	?
		Theodul	3322	Pennine alps
1879		**Nord end (attempt)**	**4609**	Pennine alps
	22	Mondelli pass	2839	Saas to Italy E of Monte Moro pass
	24	Basodino	3273	Lepontine alps

APPENDIX 3B		**Meta Brevoort (1825-1876)**	**BOLD = 4000 metre peak**	
	44 peaks, 35 passes, 16 4000m summits		**Climbing list from Paillon 1899. Other confirmatory references also used**	
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes & Reference**
1865	**13 Sept**	Strahlegg	3454	
	20 Sept	Cima di Jazzi	3804	
	22 Sept	St Theodule	3301	
	27 Sept	Col du Geant	3371	
	3rd Oct 1	**Mont Blanc**	**4801**	WCP 2049.1, #14
1866	**14 th July**	Buet	3109	
	23rd July	Col d'Argentiere	3516	
	27th July	Col du Sonadon	3504	
	28th July	Col d'Oren	3242	
	29th July	Col de valpelline	3562	
1867	**4th July**	Tschingel pass	2300	
	8th July	Wetterlucke		
	9th July	Beichgrat	3292	
	14th	**Jungfrau**	**4166**	WCP 2049.1 #21
	19th July	**Monte Rosa**	**4638**	WCP 2049.1 #23
1868	**8th July**	Wetterhorn	3692	
	18th July	Blumlisalp	3663	2nd by a woman
	20th July	Balmhorn	3698	
		Zagenjoch		
	23rd July	Nesthorn	3820	
	29th July	Monchjoch	3560	
	31st July	Eiger attempt	3970	
1869	**9th July**	Dome de Miage	3673	
	9th July	Col de Beranger		1st passage. AJ 1869 4, 384
	9th July	Col du Mont tondu	2490	
	13th July	**Grand Jorasses**	**4208**	1st female ascent
	17th july	**Grand Combin**	**4314**	
	17th july	Col du Moine	3328	1st passage. AJ 1869, 4, 384
	22nd July	**Breithorn**	**4164**	
	26th July	**Monte Rosa**	**4638**	From Riffel. AJ 1870, 5, 129

APPENDIX 3B		**Meta Brevoort (1825-1876)**	**BOLD = 4000 metre peak**	
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes & Reference**
1869		Col des Aiguilles d'Arves	3163	2nd traverse AJ 1878 8, 62-64
1870	**23rd june**	Meije Central	3974	1st ascent
	28th June	Diablerets	3210	1st descent direct to Creux de champ
	17th August	Brunnegghorn	3833	
	28th July	**Dent Blanche attempt**	**4357**	
	22nd September	**Dom des Mischabel**	**4545**	
	26th September	Eigerjoch & Monchjoch	3560	2nd passage of Eigerjoch. AJ 1870, 5, 276
1871	**5th July**	Mettenberg	3107	
	7th July	Eiger	3970	
	14th July	Silberhorn	3695	1st female ascent. AJ 1870, 5, 277
	17th July	**Jungfrau**	**4166**	1st female ascent from N side; ref as above
	18th July	Alphubel pass	3802	
	23rd July	Triftjoch	3540	
	29th July	Fusshorn	3701	1st ascent
	28th August	**Matterhorn**	**4478**	1st female traverse from Zermatt
	5th September	**Weisshorn**	**4506**	1st female ascent
	10th September	**Dent-Blanche**	**4364**	1st female ascent by Wandfluhjoch AJ 1870, 5, 277
	14th September	Bietschhorn	3934	1st female ascent. AJ 5, 277;AJ 6, 114 & 124
	20th September	Breche de la Meije	3357	1st female passage AJ 1878, 8, 64
1872	**23rd June**	Col de la Temple	3321	
	28th June	**Aletschhorn**	**4182**	
	15th July	Strahlegg	3454	
	21st July	**Schreckhorn**	**4080**	
	24th July	**Monch**	**4105**	1st female ascent from wengern alp route
	27th July	jungfraujoch	3470	AJ 1885, 19, 206
	28th July	unterbachhorn	3554	1st female ascent AJ 1871, 6 146
	2nd Sept	**Finsteraarhorn**	**4274**	

APPENDIX 3B		**Meta Brevoort (1825-1876)**		**BOLD = 4000 metre peak**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes & Reference**
1872	5th Sept	Agassizjoch	3749	2nd descent via grand couloir
	7th Sept	Finsteraarjoch	3283	
	7th Sept	Wetterhorn	3692	
	11th Sept	Mittelhorn	3704	
	11/12th Sept	Gspaltenhorn	3442	1st female ascent
	15th Sept	Gross Doldenhorn	3647	1st female ascent
	18th Sept	Aiguille Septentrionale D'Arves	3363	1st ascent by tourist from S. AJ 1871,6, 290
1873	**3rd July**	Col de la Lauze	2673	
	7th July	Rateau	3809	1st ascent
	11th July	Col des Ecrins	3367	1st female ascent
	14th July	Col de Glacier-Blanc		
	15th July	Col de la Casse-Deserte	3483	1st complete passage
	19th July	Grande- Ruine	3765	1st ascent
	23 July	Col de la Pilatte approx	3400	1st female ascent
	22nd December	" "		Visit in winter AJ 1871, 6, 406-7
	30th December	Wetterhorn	3693	1st winter ascent
1874	**15th January**	**Jungfrau**	**4166**	1st winter ascent
	22nd January	Monchjoch		1st winter ascent
	22nd June	Col du Tour	3280	
	27th June	Mont Thuria	3615	1st ascent
	2nd July	Col des Aiguille d'Arves	3163	
	10th July	Viescherjoch	3685	
	5th August	Ochsenhorn	2912	
		klein schreckhorn	3494	
1875	**4th June**	breche de valsenestre		
	27th June	Col du vallon de lanchatra		1st passage
	30th June	Pointe Marguerite on Grand- Ruine	3251	1st ascent
		Les Berches		

APPENDIX 3B		Meta Brevoort (1825-1876)		BOLD = 4000 metre peak
YEAR	DATE	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Notes & Reference
1875	3rd July	Col des Chamois		
	13th July	Aiguille de Blaitiere	3522	1st ascent
	7th Sept	**Aiguille Verte**	**4122**	3rd female ascent
	17th Sept			
1876	January	**Mont Blanc - attempt in winter**	**4810**	5 nights spent at Grand Mulets
	11 January	Fusshorn from belalp (	3628	1st ascent

APPENDIX 3C		**Anna and Ellen Pigeon**		**BOLD = 4000 metre peak** Walking unless stated otherwise
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Route and Notes**
				Taken from publication *Peaks & Passes*
1863		Becca di Nona	3165	Until 1869 there are no specific details given
1864		Piz languard	3265	
		Schwarzhorn	3151	
		Piz Muraun	2898	
		Piz Mundaun	2065	
		Tschyahorn	2713	
		Diavolezza	2947	
		Muretto pass	2626	
		Cauciasso Pass ? Engadine	2549	
		Surlei Forcla	2756	
		Fluela pass	2405	
		Albula	2313	
		Schyn Pass		
		Valserberg	2506	
		Ober alp	2051	
		Grand St Bernard	2741	
1865		Pic de Chaussy (Comballaz)	2341	
		Mont D'Or		
		Chamoissaire (Villard)	2116	
		Mont Cray (Chateau d'Oex)		
		Sparrenhorn		
1866		Mettelhorn	3413	
		Col Theodule	3322	
		Col de Mont Brulé - Col d'Hérens &	3480	From Evolèna to Arolla by this route; 19 hrs 10 mins
		Partly up Tête Blanche	3750	
				From Peaks & Passes Unless stated
		Hornli	2893	
		Belle Tola (St Luc)	3108	
		Pic d'Arzinol	3001	
		Champéry to Chamonix	1982 -2425	Cols de Sageroux, Golése, Anterne, & Coux
		Zmeiden pass	2990	

APPENDIX 3C		**Anna and Ellen Pigeon**		**BOLD = 4000 metre peak**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Route and Notes**
1886		Augstbord Pass	2916	
		Col de Torrent	2923	
		Col de Sorebois	2822	
1867		Titlis	3248	
		Schilthorn twice	2965	
		Righi Kulm	1798	
		Pilatus	2221	
		Torrenthorn	2950	
		Mont Saxe (Courmayeur)	2529	
		Cramont (Courmayeur	2761	
	Sept 6th	Grand Mulets	3300	From GM
1868		Pizzo Bianco	3352	
		Grauhaupt	3315	
		Col de Garin	3168	
		Pointe de Combetta		
		Gemstein	3048	
1869	**July 28th**	Triftjoch	3540	Zinal to Zermatt
	30th	Adler pass	3798	Zermatt to Mattmark
	31st	Monte Moro and return	2862	
	Aug-01	Mattmark - Saas Fee & back	2200	
	2	Weissthor	3580	Mattmark to Riffel
	3-7th			Stayed at Riffel
	8th		2222	To Zermatt & return to Riffel
	9	Riffel to Lys Joch		Failed, thick mist, 11 hrs out return to Riffel
	10-11th			Bad weather
	12	**Sesia Joch- 1st ever descent**	**4424**	Riffel to Chalets de Vigne 17.75 hrs
				From Chalets to Alagna
	16	Col Dobbia	2479	Alagna - Gressoney
	17	Col de Ronzola		Gressoney - Chatillon; char to Aosta
	18			Char to Aimaville; walk to Cogne
	19			Bad weather
	20	Col de la Nouva & return	2933	Too much snow for Grivola
	21	Grivola	3969	From Colne 16 hours

APPENDIX 3C		Anna and Ellen Pigeon		BOLD = 4000 metre peak
YEAR	DATE	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Route and Notes
	22	Colne to Aosta	2900	6.00 am church; left Colne 8.00 am by Col de Chaz Sèche
	23	Aosta to St Martin		8 hrs in coach
		St Martin to Gréssoney	1635	6 hours walking
	25	Grauhaupt	3315	Pennine Alps
	26	Breithorn	4164	Pennine Alps
		Cimes Blanches	2980	
		Théodule Pass	3295	
	27	Col Durand inc. arête of Mont Durand	3474	Zermatt to Zinal
	28	Pas de Lona	2787	Zinal to Evolèna
	29			Evolèna to Arolla
	31	Pas de Chèvres	2851	Arolla to Chalets de Chermontane
		Col de Cheillon	3200	chermontane
		Col de Mont Rouge	3341	
	Sep-01	Col de Fenêtre		To Valpelline & Aosta
	2nd			Drove Aosta - Courmayeur
				To Mont Fréty
	4th	Col du Geant	3371	Mont Fréty to Chamonix
	7th	Aiguille Verte attempt		Failure, ' thanks to a Chamonix guide'
1872	**July 23rd**	Traverse Torrenthorn	3003	Leukerbad to Gampel
	24th			Gampel - Turtman - Gruben
	25	Traverse Schwarzhorn	3201	Gruben to St Nicholas
	26		2222	To Riffel for Monte Rosa next day
	27			Unable to go - no luggage
	28		2222	Return Zermatt & back to Riffel
	29th July -Aug 4th			Bad weather - return to Zermatt
	Aug 5th	Col d'Hérens	3480	Zermatt to Evolèna
	6th			Evolèna to Arolla
	7th	Ridge above Glacier des Douves Blanches	3625	
	8-9th			Snow
	10	Tête Blanche	3750	Arolla to Zermatt
		Col de Berthol	3414	
		Col de Valpelline	3562	

APPENDIX 3C		Anna and Ellen Pigeon		BOLD = 4000 metre peak
YEAR	DATE	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Route and Notes
1872	11th		2222	To Riffel pm from Zermatt
	12	Weissthor	3580	
	13			Bad weather
	14	Col delle Loccie	3600	Macugnaga to Alagna
	15			Fête day, unable to start early enough
	16	Col della Piscie		Alagna -Schlarfer chalets
	17	**Lysjoch**	**4277**	
		Parrotspitze	**4432**	To Riffel
	16			To Zermatt; drove to Randa pm
	19	Bies Joch	3549	Randa to Zinal
		Col des Diablons		
	20			Slept at Arpitetta alp for Moming pas
	21-26			Bad weather - return to Zinal
	27	Moming Pass	3745	Zinal to Zermatt; NEW ROUTE
	28			To Randa too sleep for the Dom
	29			bad weather
	30	**Dom**	**4545**	
	31			Randa to Visp; Char to Brieg
	Sept 1st			After church walk to Belalp
	2nd	**Aletschhorn**	**4182**	
	3	Sparrenhorn	3026	Walked to Nessel pm
	4			Massa gorge and via Riederalp to Eggischhorn
	5	Oberaarjoch	3233	Eggischhorn to Grimsel
	6th			To Rhone glacier and back
	7	Strahleck	3340	Grimsel to Grindelwald
	8-9th			Bad weather
	10th			Slept at Swiss Alpine hut for Wetterhorn
	11	Wetterhorn	3692	
	12		2061	To Little Scheideck
	13	Jungfrau Joch	3470	5 hrs step cutting
	14	Grunhornlücke, Agassizhorn	3946	Faulberg hut to Grindelwald; char to Interlaken
		Agassiz Joch & Finsteraarjoch	3657	

APPENDIX 3C		Anna and Ellen Pigeon		BOLD = 4000 metre peak
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Route and Notes**
1873	**Jul-21**	Schilthorn	2973	Bernese alps
	Jul-22	Murren - Eisenfluh - Schneinige Platte		Bernese alps
	24-25th	To Taubenhorn each day		
	26	Via Faulhorn to Grindelwald	2683	Bernese alps
	30	Mettenberg	3183	Bernese alps
	Aug 3rd		2061	To the Little Scheideck
	4	Begin Jungfrau		Turned back - poor weather
	5	**Jungfrau**	**4166**	Traverse from little Scheideck to Faulberg hut
	7	**Finsteraarhorn**	**4274**	From & return to Faulberg & on to Aeggischhorn
	9		2133	To Bel alp via Rieder Alp
	11th-12th			Bad weather; to Breig and char to Visp
	13			Visp to Saas
	14	Alphubeljoch		Saas to Zermatt
	16	Col St Theodule	3802	To Breuil (3rd time)
	18	To Italian hut on Matterhorn	3322	Snow storm at night
	21	**Matterhorn**	**4487**	1st female ascent from Italy
	25		2222	To the Riffel
	26	**Monte Rosa**	**4634**	
	27	Riffelhorn	2931	
	29			Gornergrat & descend to Zermatt for Rimpfischhorn
	30-31			Bad weather
	Sep-01	Unter-Rothorn	3106	
	2	**Rimpfischhorn**	**4199**	
	3	Col St Theodule		4th time going to Valtournanche; too much snow for Weisshorn
	4	Grand Tournalin	3400	
	5			Val Tournanche to Chatillon; char to Aosta
	6			Drove Aosta- Pré St Didier; on foot to Courmayeur
	8			Bad weather
				To Mottet for Col du Mont Tondu
	10	Cols des Fours,		Bad weather prevented Mont Blanc ascent

APPENDIX 3C		**Anna and Ellen Pigeon**		**BOLD = 4000 metre peak**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Route and Notes**
1873	**Sept**	Bonhomme et de Voza	2483	Mottet to Chamonix via these cols
	11			Char to Argentière; walk to Pierre `a Bérard
	12	Buet	3109	Return to Argentiére; char to Chamonix
1874	**July 20th**	Col de Colon		From & return to Arolla; bad weather after
	21st	Bad weather	3130	Gave up Mont Colon
	22nd			To Bricolla
	23	Col du Grand Cornier		To Zinal
	27	Diablons	3555	Bernese alps
	28	Pas de la Forcletta	3605	Zinal to Gruben
	29	Augstbord pass	2989	3rd time, to St Nicholas from Gruben
	30-31st		2917	Bad weather
	Aug 1st	Ober-Rothorn		
	2nd	Théodulhorn & Col Théodule, 5th time	3414	Zermatt to Valtournanche
	3rd		3418	Walk Valtournanche to Chatillon (approx. 12 miles)
	4th			Slept out above glacier 6.5 hr walks from Courmayeur
	4th-5th	**Mont Blanc**	**4810**	To Grand Mulets
	6th			Descend to Chamonix
	7th-8th	**Aiguille Verte attempt**		Caught in snow storm with AC members Morshead & Matthews
	9th-10th			Bad weather, stuck in Chamonix
				Walk to Argentière
	12th	Col du Tour	3280	To Orsières; char to Bourg St Pierre
	13	Col de Sonadon	3489	Bad weather
	14th			Bad weather
	17	Pigne d'Arolla	3796	Mauvoisin to Arolla
	18th			Bad weather
	19	Mont Colon - attempt		Out 17.5 hrs & no peak!

APPENDIX 3C		Anna and Ellen Pigeon		BOLD = 4000 metre peak
YEAR	DATE	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Route and Notes
1874	20	Col de Bertol & Col d'Hérens	3637	To Zermatt
	21st		3480	Unable to start- guide failure
	23rd			Slept out for Zinalrothorn
	24th	**Zinal Rothorn**	**4223**	Moming pass & down to Zermatt
	25th			Bad weather
	26th			Slept out for Weisshorn
	27th	**Weisshorn**	**4506**	
	28th - 29th			Bad weather
	31st	**Breithorn**	**4164**	From Zermatt & return to Riffel
	Sept 1st	**Monte Rosa**	**4638**	From & return to Riffel
	3rd	**Castor**	**4230**	
	3rd	**Pollux**	**4092**	From Riffel, return to Zermatt
	4th			Bad weather
1874	6th			Slept out for Gabelhorn
	7th	**Obergabelhorn**	**4073**	
	8th			To Matterhorn hut
	9th	**Matterhorn, 2nd time**	**4478**	Swiss side only
				Bad weather halted tour
1875	**July 19th**	Col Du Bonhomme		To Bourg St Maurice
	20th	Col Du Mont	2525	
	26th	Grand Apparei	2631	Val de Rhêmes to Val de Tignes
		Col de Gailletta	3503	
	27th	Col de Galèse	3062	Tignes to Ceresole
	29th	Col de Tetret	2998	Ceresole to Chalets Du Mont Corve, Val Savaranche
	30th	**Grand Paradis**	**4061**	
	31st	Col de l'Herbetet	3048	Val Savaranche to Colne
	Aug 2nd	Col de Grancrou	3363	Cogne to Val Piantonetto
		Col de la Tribulation		
	3rd	Tour du Grand St. Pierre	3678	Val Piantonetto to Cogne
	4th-6th			Bad weather
	7th			Walked to Col Du Drinc & Point de La Trombe

APPENDIX 3C		**Anna and Ellen Pigeon**		**BOLD = 4000 metre peak**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Route and Notes**
1875	9th	Grivola	2555	
	10th	Tersiva	3970	
	11th	Mont Emilius	3368	Descend to Aosta
	12th		3559	Walked to Bionaz for the Bec de Lusey
	13th			Bad weather, descend to Valpelline
	14th	Col de Valsorey	3113	Valpelline to Bourg St Pierre
	15th	**Grand Combin**	**4317**	Without sleeping out
		Col du Sonadon	3489	
		Col du Maison Blanche	3412	Descend via to Bourg St Pierre
	17th	Col des Planards	2860	Bourg St Pierre to Courmayeur
		Col de Ferrex	2656	Courmayeur
	19th	Col de La Tour Ronde		Courmayeur to hut at Aiguille de Midi
		La Tour Ronde	3840	
	20th	Aiguille du midi	3843	Descend to Pierre à Béranger for Aiguille Verte
	21st			Bad weather, descend to Chamonix
	23rd			Slept at Pierre à Béranger
1875	**Aug.** 24th	**Aiguille Verte**	**4122**	Return to Chamonix
	26th	Brevent	2525	Bad weather after this
	Sept 1st	Mischabeljoch	3855	Saas to Zermatt
	6th	To Riffel		
	7th	**Lyskamm**	**4538**	
	8th			To Zermatt via Gornergrat
	9th			To Stockje to sleep for Dent Blanche
	10th			Bad weather "mountains closed"
1876	**July 14th**	Balmhorn	3698	From Schwarenbach (? Schwarzbach)
		Altels	3636	
	17th	Blumlisalphorn	3671	Crossing to Kien Thal
	18th			Kien Thal to Murren by Sefinnen furgge

APPENDIX 3C		Anna and Ellen Pigeon		Bold = 4000 metre peak
YEAR	DATE	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Route and Notes
1876	19th		2610	Grindelwald to Little Scheideck
	21st	**Monch**	**4105**	Descended to Barenegg
	22nd			Walked to Grindelwald
	23rd			Walked to Little Scheideck for Eiger
	24-27th			Bad weather, went down to Interlaken until snow melted
	28th			From Grindelwald to Kastenstein (a cave)
	29th	**Schreckhorn**	**4080**	Return to Grindelwald
	30			Walked to Little Scheideck
	31	Eiger	3970	
	Aug 1-2nd			Bad weather
	Aug 3rd	Lauteraarjoch	3250	Misled by guide, wanted to cllimb Studerhorn (3638)
	4th	Scheufzerhorn(scheuchzer horn)	3493	
		Grunerhorn	3518	
		Oberaarjoch	3128	To æggishhorn
	5th			Walked to Belalp vie Märjelensee
1876	**Aug.** 7th	Gross Nesterhorn	3820	Descend to Ried
	9th	Bietschorn	3934	Descend to Raron; haye cart to Visp
	10th			Walked to St Nicholas; drove to zermatt
	11th			Up to Stockje hut
	12th	**Dent d'Hérens**	**4171**	Descended to Prérayen
	13th			Walked to Bionnaz for 8.30 service
	14th	Bec de Luseney	3764	
	15th	Col de Colon	3130	Préyen to Arolla
	16th	Bad weather		
	17th	Mont Colon	3738	
	18th		2925	Walked to Pas de Chèvres & Col de Riedmatten
	19th	Aiguille de la Za	3673	& then
		Col d'Hérens	3480	from Arolla to Zermatt

APPENDIX 3C		**Anna and Ellen Pigeon**		**Bold = 4000 metre peak**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**		**Route and Notes**
	20th-28th			Bad weather
	29th			Walked up the Höhbalm
	30th	Allalin pass	3570	Weather too poor for Allalinhorn
	31st	Bad weather		
	Sept 1st	**Weismiess**	**4031**	
	2nd	Reid pass	3597	Saas to St Nicholas & char to Zermatt
	3rd			Too much snow for Dent Blanche

APPENDIX 3D		**Margaret Anne Jackson,** (1843–1906)		**BOLD = 4000 metre peaks**
		140 Grand Ascents		
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes or Reference**
1872				Begins climbing - DNB
1873	Aug 24th	**Monte Rosa - ? by a new route**	**4656**	K39 Ferdinand Imseng
	Sept 8th	Weissthor		K39 Ferdinand Imseng
		Lysjoch		K39 Ferdinand Imseng
		Col delle Loccie		K39 Ferdinand Imseng
1874				Husband joins AC - Mumm
1874		Wetterhorn		K38 Peter Egger
		Monchjoch	**4105**	K38 Peter Egger
		Jungfrau		K38 Peter Egger
1876		**Weismiess**	**4031**	1st ascent of East face of either sex
1877	Aug 2nd	**Lauteraarjoch, Finsteraarjoch**		L4 Christian Bohren
	Between Aug 15th- Sept 27th	**Matterhorn**	**4487**	Whymper 1900
	As above	**Lyskamm**	**4538**	K39 Ferdinand Imseng
	As above	**Breithorn traverse**		K39 Ferdinand Imseng
	Aug 28th	**Jägerhorn**	**3970**	K39 Ferdinand Imseng, 1st female ascent
1878		**Mont Blanc**	**4810**	Mumm p202-3- all 1878 climbs
		Col de Miage	3376	
		Gabelhorn	**4073**	
		Breithorn	**4164**	
		Bruneggho rn	3833	
1878		**Nord end (Monte Rosa)**	**4609**	
		Cold Glant		
		Weissthor	3580	
		Biessjoch	3549	
		Bruneggjoch	3365	
		Col d'Herens	3480	
		Grand Cornier	3962	
		Moming Pass	3175	
1879	From 10th	**West Arete of the Dom**	**4545**	1st ascent K11 Aloys Pollinger (not with husband)
	August	**Dent Blanche**	**4356**	K11 Aloys Pollinger (with husband)
	to Sept 15th	**Dent d'Hérens**	**4171**	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Rimpfischhorn	**4199**	K11 Aloys Pollinger

APPENDIX 3D		**Margaret Anne Jackson,** (1843–1906)		**BOLD = 4000 metre peaks**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes or Reference**
1879		**Monchjoch**	**4105**	K11 Aloys Pollinger
1881				Husband dies in January
1882		**Taschhorn**	**4491**	SE ridge, 1st ascent
1882		**Dent Blanche**	**4356**	1st ascent western arête & 1st descent via Ferpecle Ridge W arête with K Schultz.
1883	Sept 15th	**? Rimpfischorn & several others (undecipherable)**	**4199**	K12 Aloys Pollinger
1884		Grand Dru	3754	1st ascent by woman
1886		Grand Charmoz	3445	1st ascent by woman
Jan 1888		**Lauteraarhorn,**	**4273**	1st winter ascent.
1888		**Gross Fiescherhorn**	**4049**	1st winter ascent
		Traverse of Jungfrau	**4158**	1st winter ascent
		Pfaffenstockli		1st winter ascent
July 1888		**Gross Fiescherhorn**	**4049**	K28 Christian Jossi
		Kleine Fiescherhorn	3984	K28 Christian Jossi

APPENDIX 3E		**Emily Hornby (1834-1906)**		**BOLD = 4000 metre peak**
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**REFERENCE**
				From *Mountain Records* unless stated otherwise
1872		Col de geant		K36 Laurent Lanier
1873		Titlis	3238	
1874		**Monte Rosa**	**4634**	
		Buet	3109	
		Col de Sageoux	2413	
	Sept 2nd	Col de Géant; Courmayeur - Chamonix	3371	K36 Laurent Lanier, with her sister
1875	Aug 15th/16th	**Matterhorn - 5 hrs from the hut**	**4478**	K11 Aloys Pollinger
1876		**Dent Blanche**	**4356**	
		Finsteraarhorn	**4274**	
		Jungfrau	**4158**	
		Weisshorn	**4505**	
1877		Tschingel pass	2820	
		Theodule	3322	
		Col Durand	3474	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Col de Cheillon	3200	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Col de Mont Brulé	3213	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Col de Lauzan	3301	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Wetterhorn	3692	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Grand Paradiso	**4061**	1st female traverse Cogne to Valsaveranche
		Eiger	3970	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Breithorn	**4164**	
1877		Altels	3629	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Grivola	3969	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Jungfraujoch	3471	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Monchjoch	3658	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Schreckhorn abandoned; poor weather		K11 Aloys Pollinger
1879	all between	Brunegghorn	3833 3101	K11 Aloys Pollinger
	1st July	Rothorn		K11 Aloys Pollinger
	and 18th Aug	Bies Joch	3549	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Col de Granasson		
		Col de Miage	3376	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Col de Bonhomme	2483	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Jungfraujoch	3471	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Weissmies	**4017**	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Aletschorn	**4192**	K11 Aloys Pollinger
		Moming Pass	3745	K11 Aloys Pollinger

APPENDIX 3E		**Emily Hornby (1834-1906)**		
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**REFERENCE**
		Cols de Galése, Voza		K11 Aloys Pollinger
1880		Dachstein	2995	
		Hochnarr		
		Watzmann		
		Pfandelscharte pass	2665	
1881		**Matterhorn (Breuil-zermatt)**	**4478**	
		Mont Pourri	3779	1st ascent
		Ruitor from Zinal	3486	
		Col de Galése	2998	
		Dom - failed attempt		
1882		Adler	3988	
		Galenstock	3586	
		Mittelhorn	3704	
		Mont Moro	2862	
		Col de la Reuse d'Arolla	3200	
		Col de Sonadon	3489	
		Col de Valpelline	3562	
		Oberaarjoch	3216	
		Monchjoch	3658	
1883		Kreuz Spitze	2185	
		Monte Confinale	3370	
		Ortler	3905	
		Cevedale pass	3271	
		Col de Lago	2111	
		Monchjoch	3658	
1885		Dent du Midi	3260	
		Col de Bertol	3414	Beginning of haute route from Zermatt
		Col de la Maison Blanche	3426	
		Col de Fenêtre de Saleina	3264	to chamonix
		Col de Tour	3280	
		Col de Mont Rouge	3341	
		Col de Chardonnet	3325	
1886		Marmolata	3343	
		Nuvolao		
		Tofana		
		Weisskugel	3746	
1887		Tyndall		
		Breche de la Meije	3357	
		Col de Colon		
		Triftjoch	3540	
1888		Monte Cristallo	3199	
		Monte Piano	2325	

APPENDIX 3E		Emily Hornby (1834-1906)		
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**REFERENCE**
1889		Toured Dauphine		
		Breche de la Meije	3357	
1890		Bocca di Brenta		
1891		Terglou		
1895		Daunjoch		
1896		Kriwan		
1906		Tour of Carpathians		
Undated				
		Alphubel	**4206**	
		Pic D'Arolla	3796	
		Becca di Nona	3142	
		Brevent	2525	
		Mettenberg	3104	
		Riffelhorn	2927	
		Wildstrubel	3243	
		Mont Blanc	**4810**	

APPENDIX 3F		**Katherine Richardson (1854-1927).**		**Bold = 4000m peak**
116 first class ascents; 60 minor- most guideless. N.B not a complete list of her climbs				
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes/Reference.** Paillon 1927 unless stated
1871		Piz Languard	3262	
		Piz Corvatsch	3451	
		Surleje pass	2328	
		Sella pass		
1879		3 summits of Piz Palu	**3901**	1st ascent traverse
1882	July 25th	**Zinal Rothorn**	**4221**	**All four peaks in 8 days**
	27th	**Weisshorn**	**4505**	
	29th	**Monte Rosa**	**4634**	
	August 1st	**Matterhorn**	**4487**	18hrs from/to Zermatt
1884	August 3rd	**Dom**	**4545**	U9 Peter Tagwaulder
		Gabelhorn	**4063**	U9 Peter Tagwaulder
1888		**Aiguille de Bionnassay arête**	**4052**	1st ascent
		To Dome de Gouter	**4304**	
		5 peaks of Aiguille de Grds Charmoz	3445	1st female ascent
	August 29th	La Meije- WITHOUT SLEEPING OUT	3984	1st female ascent
		Les Ecrins - WITHOUT SLEEPING OUT	**4102**	1st traverse up south/down north face
1889		Pointe de Vouasson	3490	In Pennine alps
		Dent Perroc	3676	In Pennine alps
	July 26th	Aiguille de la Za - NEW ROUTE	3662	1st ascent
	August 2nd	Pigne D'Arolla - NEW ROUTE	3796	1st ascent
		Aiguilles Rouges -traverse of		
		Aiguille Verte	**4122**	In Mont Blanc massif
		Aiguille de Talêfre	3730	In Mont Blanc massif
1889	August 30th	Both peaks of the Dru	3754	1st ascent from Petit to the Grand Dru. AJ 1889,14, 511-512
1890		**Lyskamm**	**4538**	
	August 10th	**Castor, 1st descent by N face**	**4222**	AJ 1890, 15, p364
		Jungfrau; from Scheidegg, descend to Eggishorn	**4158**	L4 Christian Bohren
	Sept 5th	Aiguille de Chardonnet, south face	3822	1st female ascent, ref as above
1891		Aiguille d'Arves	3514	1st female ascent Mary Paillon to step first onto the summit
?		Mont Pelvoux	3946	In the écrins
1893		Meije Orientale	3890	With Mlle paillon

APPENDIX 3F		Katherine Richardson (1854-1927).		
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes**
1897	5th September	Mont Pelvoux	3946	last major climb

APPENDIX 3G		Elizabeth Le Blond (1861-1934)		BOLD = 4000 metre peak
35 4000m summits				
YEAR	SEASON	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Notes & Reference - Le Blond's list of climbs in AC archive
1882	Summer	Aiguille de Belvedere	2965	
		Aiguille de Tacul	3444	
		Mont Blanc from Chamonix	**4810**	
		Mont Blanc from Courmayeur	**4810**	
		Grands Jorasses	**4208**	
		Col de Géant	3365	
		Aiguille de Tour	3540	
	Winter	Col de Tacul	3337	1st crossing in winter
		Col & Aiguille de Grand Montets	3295	
1883	Winter	Aiguille de Midi	3842	1st winter ascent
		Mont Blanc to top Mur de la Cote	**4810**	driven back by storm
		Col d'Argentiére	1996	1st winter passage
		Col de Chardonnet & Fenêtre de Salena	3325	
	Summer	Col du Géant	3365	
		La Vierge		
		Dent du Géant	**4013**	**1st female ascent**
		Matterhorn - to Breuil & return Zermatt	**4478**	
		by Théodule pass		
		Unter Gabelhorn	3392	
		Adler pass	3798	
		Weissthor	3580	
		Col Durand	3474	
		Trift pass	3540	
1884	Winter	Piz Julier	3380	
		Schneekuppe	3920	
1884	Summer	**Strahlhorn**	**4190**	
		Col Durand	3474	
		Dom	**4545**	
		Bruneggjoch		
		Biesjoch	3549	
		Bieshorn east summit	**4153**	**1st ascent**
		Stellijoch		
		Balfrinhorn	3802	

APPENDIX 3G		Elizabeth Le Blond (1861-1934)		**Bold = 4000m peak**
YEAR	**SEASON**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes & Reference**
		Reid Pass	3597	
		Weissmies (traverse)	**4031**	
		Weisshorn	**4506**	Record time -4hrs excl halts
1885		Schwestern	2053	Several times
		Blumen		Several times
1886	Summer	**Allalinhorn**	**4027**	
		Eggischorn	2927	
		Mischabeljoch	3856	
	Summer	Alphubel	3802	
		Lagginhorn	**4010**	
		Nadelhorn	**4327**	twice
		Eiger	3970	
		Wetterhorn	3692	
1887				Did not climb
1888	Summer	Piz Gluschaint	3594	
		Piz Bernina	**4049**	
		Piz Palü	3901	
1889	Summer	Sella pass	2244	
	& Late autumn	Piz Morteratsch	3751	
		Piz Tschierva	3546	
		Piz Cambrena	3606	
		Jungfrau	**4166**	
		Mönch	**4105**	
		Strahlegg Pass	3315	
		Wellenkuppe	3903	
		Rimpfischorn	**4199**	
		Col d'Hérens	3480	
		Titlis	3238	
	Winter	Schwestern	2053	
1890	Summer &	Disgrazia	3678	
	Late autumn	Monte Sissone	3330	
		Zinal Rothorn	**4223**	
		Trifthorn	3728	
		Ober Gabelhorn	**4073**	
		Fee Pass		
		Schreckhorn	**4080**	
		Finsteraarhorn	**4274**	
1890		**Lauteraarhorn**	**4042**	
		Wetterhorn	3708	

APPENDIX 3G		Elizabeth Le Blond (1861-1934)		Bold = 4000m peak
YEAR	SEASON	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Notes & Reference
1891	Summer &	Piz Palü	3901	1st time in winter
	Autumn	Zwei Schwestern		
		Piz Bernina by Scharte route	**4049**	
		Weissthor	3580	
		Hohberghorn	**4219**	
		Bruneggborn by Biesjoch	3833	
		Col d'Hérens	3480	
		Mont Collon	3637	
		Aiguille de la Za	3668	
		Dent Blanche	4364	
		Jungfrau from Roththal	4166	
	Winter	Caputschin Pass		
1892	Summer	**Castor & Felikjoch**	**4230**	
		Piz Roseg	3937	
		Piz Sella	2284	
		Zwei Schwestern		
		Piz Palu	3901	
		Crast Agüzza	3869	
		Piz Morteratsch	3751	
		Piz Julier	3380	
		Pic Coolidge	3774	
		Pic des Etages		
	Autumn	**Pointe des Écrins**	**4102**	
		Meije	3983	
		Grande Ruine , descent by E face	3765	1st descent by this route
		Breche de la Meije	3357	
1893	Summer and	Cima di Rosso	3366	
	Late autumn	Piz Tremoggia	3441	
		Sella pass	2244	
		Tinzenhorn	3173	
		Piz Palu	3901	
		Piz Morteratsch &Tschierva	3751	
		Cevedale	3769	
		Konigspitz	3850	
		Ortler by Horten Grat	3905	
		Cristallo	3221	
		Pelmo	3168	
		Brecca di Mezzodi	2603	
		Cristallino		
		Crida Rossa	2965	

APPENDIX 3G		Elizabeth Le Blond (1861-1934)		Bold = 4000m peak
YEAR	SEASON	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Notes & Reference
1893		Croda da lago	2709	
1894		Drei Blumen		
		Piz d'Aela	2680	
		Caputschin pass		
		Piz Scersen	3901	1st female ascent. 1st descent by S face
		Piz Bernina	**4049**	
		Weissthor		
		Aletschorn	**4182**	
		Fusshorn	3627	
		Unterbachorn		
		Nesthorn	3820	
		Beichgrat	3292	
1895		Zwei Schwestern		
		Drei Blumen		
		Tschierva by Roseg arête	3546	
		Sella & Bella Vista Passes		
		Bietschorn	3934	
1895		**Monte Rosa by Grenz rocks**	**4634**	
		Zinal Rothorn	**4223**	Crossed twice on same day
		Taschhorn	**4491**	1st descent route
		Schallihorn		
		Felikjoch	**4068**	
		Lyskamm	**4538**	
1896	Winter	Crast Aguzzza		1st ascent in winter
		Schwestern		
		Disgrazia	3678	1st ascent in winter
		Piz Zupo		1st ascent in winter
		Drei Blumen		1st ascent in winter
	Summer	Eggisshorn & over Mittaghorn	3892	
		Weissmies	**4031**	
		Fletschhorn	3985	
		Portiengrat		
		Wellenkuppe	3903	
		Monte Rosa	**4638**	
1897		1st trip to Norway		5 peaks
1898	Winter	Piz Sella		
		Piz Palü	3901	
		Piz Zupo		
		Zwei schwestern - Drei Blumen		
	Summer	eight 1st ascents in Norway		
		plus 4 more Norwegian peaks		

APPENDIX 3G		Elizabeth Le Blond (1861-1934)		Bold = 4000m peak
YEAR	SEASON	MOUNTAIN OR COL	HEIGHT	Notes & Reference
1899	Summer?	Twelve more 1st ascents		
1899		12 1st ascents in Norway & 3 others		
		Plus 3 more other Norwegian peaks		
1903		Wellenkuppe	3903	
		Various minor climbs		

APPENDIX 3H		**Mary Isabella Straton (1838-1918)**	**BOLD = 4000 metre peak NB- Not a complete list of her climbs**	
YEAR	**DATE**	**MOUNTAIN OR COL**	**HEIGHT**	**Notes & References - mainly from Morin 1969**
1861	August 31st	Grand Mulets , ? Any higher	3051	GM. with John Gardiner, various guides; Jean Charlet was porter
1869		**Dom des Mischabels**	**4545**	with Pralong, Charlet & Biener
		Matterhorn- failed attempt		With Lewis- Lloyd
1871	August 8th	**Mont Blanc**	**4810**	with Jean Charlet
		Aiguille de Moine	3412	**1st ascent with E.lewis Lloyd, Charlet & Joseph Simond**
		Monte Viso	3841	With Lewis-Lloyd, Charlet and Simond
1874	July 10th	**Aiguille & Dome de Gouter, Mont Blanc**	**4810**	descending to Grand Mulets. GM
	July ?	Col d'Argentiere	3552	WCP 2049.1, #77
	July 26th	arrives in Zermatt		as above, no details of specific climbs but talks of her 'adventures'
1875		**Ancien Passage, Mont Blanc**	**4810**	with Jean Charlet
		Aiguille du Midi	3842	with Charlet
		Aiguille de Blaitiere	3522	?with Charlet
		Pointe Isabella	3761	1st ascent
1876		**Mont Blanc via Grand Mulets**	**4810**	**1st winter ascent, with Charlet, Couttet and Michel Balmat**
		Les Dents du Midi	3257	with Charlet
1881		Pointe de la Persévérance	2901	named to commemorate their determination

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